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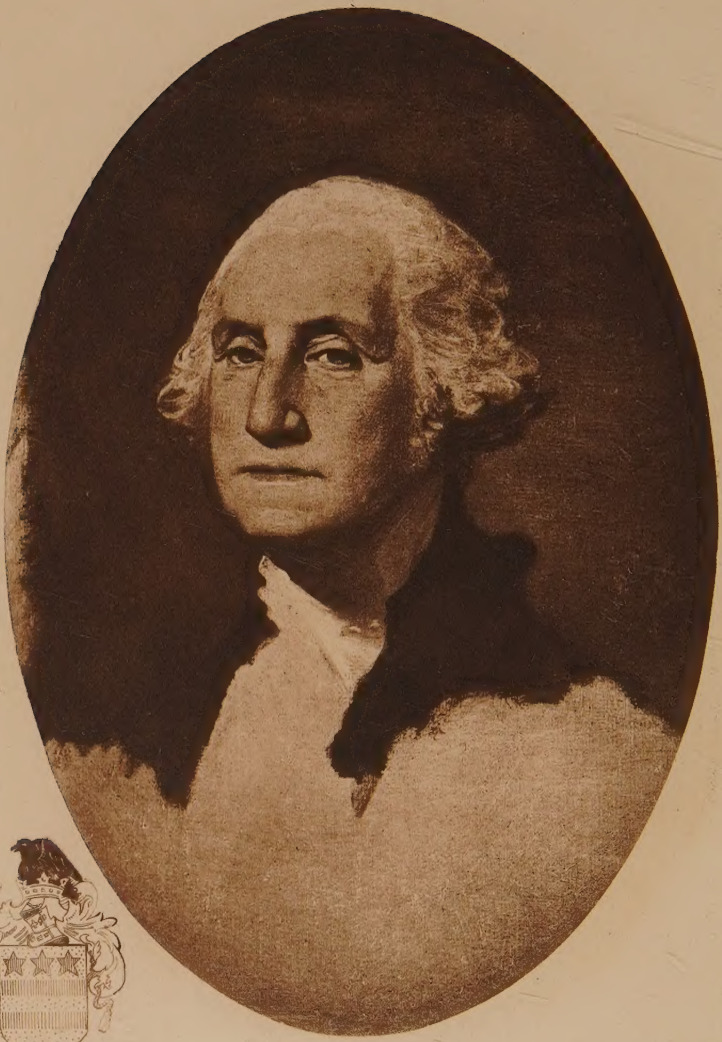

VOLUME IX

# AUTOBIOGRAPHY AT THE OPENING OF THE REVOLUTIONARY AGE

(1750—1790)

INCLUDING THE SELF-NARRATIVES OF

WASHINGTON
*The Liberator of America*

THOMAS JEFFERSON
*The Founder of American Democracy*

EDWARD GIBBON
*The Historian of the Ancient World*

MME. DU BARRY
*Real Ruler of France Under Louis XV*

GOETHE
*The Greatest Poet and Thinker of the German Race*

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY BY

WILBUR L. CROSS
*Dean of Yale University*

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# INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME IX

## AUTOBIOGRAPHY AT THE OPENING OF THE REVOLUTIONARY AGE

## 1750-1790

With this volume we enter on the Age of Revolution. America and France become the centers of our vision, flaming torches of liberty, but of a liberty only to be gained through bloodshed and tempestuous upheaval, the massacre of kings and lords in Europe and of the "embattled farmers" of America. The war of the American Revolution lasted from 1775 to 1783; the French Revolution began in 1789 and culminated with the execution of King Louis XVI in 1793.

Before we examine the writers whose narratives deal with these world-changing revolts, let us note the last important autobiography which speaks solely of the preceding period. This is Goethe's *Poetry and Truth,* a famous work by a very famous man. At first glance it would seem strange that Goethe, usually recognized as the greatest thinker of the German race, lived through the whole of this tremendous period, but was never carried away by the enthusiasm which Democracy's uplifted call aroused in the breasts of so many less intellectual men. Democracy seemed to many Germans, even then, to be what their leaders have so often declared it since, an impractical and even unattractive dream. Goethe, for example, raged against officialdom, the bureaucracy of his time, but saw no escape from it in Democracy.

Long after the tumult of revolt had all died down, this mighty poet and philosopher looked back over his long life and began to write its story. He started with his earliest youth, carried his tale down only to the year 1775, and there abandoned it. It is the story of a dreamer looking gently back upon the happiness of youth. It is told with a keen and beautiful appreciation of all that was best worth while in himself and in the social organism of his country. Goethe's pic-

tures of his various youthful loves are charming. His tender appreciation of the glamor thrown by memory over those early days wooes us from his every page, as it does in the smiling self-confessing title, *Poetry and Truth*. But all this brilliant accuracy of self-understanding contains no understanding of the times. Rather is there blind arrogant acceptance of the privileges of rank, a dismissal of all thought of the common folk, as being of the beasts that die. There is no word of praise for the vast democratic changes that were to come, no word of comment as to the glory or the joy of a people's self-government.

In England too there was a lack of wakefulness as to the new conditions close at hand. Edward Gibbon, the renowned English historian of *The Decline and Fall of Rome,* a work long held up as the unapproachable ideal of historical writing, Gibbon prepared an autobiography at this period; but he gives in it very little space and very little weight to the idea of government "by the people." Gibbon's autobiography is often held up as a model of its kind, just as is his history; but they are only models in a literary sense. This is especially true of the autobiography. We may well offer it to readers and praise its literary style, its clearness, its wit, its honesty, its simple joyous courage. We may reach the height of praise and say so should lives be lived and so should autobiographies be written. But some earnest advocate of human progress might well respond by asking why such lives should be narrated at all. If men like Goethe and like Gibbon could be so blind to the chief movement of their age, can they be accounted truly great? Or rather can the ablest man be accounted intellectually as anything more than the blind pawn of circumstance, his boasted reason enabling him to see into the future scarce a shadow farther than does the toiling ant?

Goethe and Gibbon, well fed, well-placed patricians, dwelling comfortably in middle class security and comparative wealth, what did they know of the real forces of their day? The compelling forces of pride and hunger, pride stung by repeated insult, hunger pushed to the edge of starvation, these were stupendous impulses unfelt by either the German or the English burgher. These easy gentlemen knew scarce as much of the lower, larger world, as even Jeanne Du Barry did, Du

Barry the French "king's mistress" whose remarkable autobiography also comes to us from this time and is most impressively illuminating.

The true story of a woman of the streets must ever be pathetically instructive to thinking folk. Human vice and human misery must ever arouse pity as well as reprobation. But here is a gay cocotte who has the independence, the intelligence, the vivacity, and the good luck to dance out of all her difficulties into a rank which seemed to her almost a paradise. Louis XV, the feeble king whose degeneracy did so much to cause the degeneracy of the French aristocracy, had been ruled all his life by mistresses. In his old age he was finally attracted by the Du Barry, and was ruled by her for the last few years preceding his death in 1774. Banished from the court by the king's more severe and well-meaning heir Louis XVI, Madame Du Barry amused her solitude by writing her recollections of her impoverished youth in the streets of Paris and of her reckless splendor at the court. The final chapter she could not add; for her life ended with her seizure and execution by the common people of France when the Revolution shifted the power from her hands to theirs. How did this child of the gutter, this gorgeous butterfly, this creature who had known the two extremes of the French life of her day, how did she estimate them both? Let the reader measure for himself.

Louis XVI came to the throne of France, as we have noted, a well-meaning youth, in 1774. The next year the American Revolution broke out; and we have seen in a preceding volume how Franklin, the aged American philosopher, visited the court of the youthful king to seek French aid. In America the Revolution was upheld and brought to a successful end by Washington; and it is Washington therefore, rather than the dreaming Goethe, who is to be regarded as the greatest figure of the age. Whatever slightest autobiographical material remains of Washington is gathered here and reverently presented.

Next to Washington in importance to America at this time, we usually rank Thomas Jefferson, not only because he wrote the Declaration of Independence and performed a thousand other statesmanlike achievements; but even more because he ultimately became Washington's chief opponent, the founder

of the great opposition party which insisted on going far beyond Washington in its assertion of Democracy, its hope and its reliance upon government by the masses themselves. Whether right or wrong in this extreme Democracy, Jefferson thus stands forward as America's companion figure to Washington. His enemies called him a demagogue; they regarded his advocacy of a complete "people's government" as a mere trick to win the people's support for his own selfish ends. Fortunately we have some chance to judge for ourselves this much disputed champion of the people; for he has left us, as Washington did not, a fairly full account of his own career.

Jefferson's autobiography stops with the year 1790, stops before he became president; but for all those earlier years of stress and trial, those years which mold the man, he stands forth in his narrative undeniably a man, and an honest man. Moreover, after the success of the American Revolution Jefferson was sent to France as the American envoy there, and he saw and partly influenced the opening of the French Revolution. Hence we have from him an account of the very highest value, a first-hand account by an outsider, an eminent, able and sympathetic outsider, of the earliest mutterings of the storm. That cataclysmic storm which was ultimately to sweep away every vestige of the ancient autocratic regime, will be depicted in later volumes, by those who faced it. It is well that our first picture of the outburst should come from the understanding, the sympathetic but disinterested, pen of the great American.

# EDWARD GIBBON

*By Wilbur L. Cross, Ph.D.*

THE autobiography of a man who has written a great book is certain to be of surpassing interest. He alone knows, as no one else can know them, the incidents of his life; he alone can tell why he wrote that book; and the story as he relates it lets us into all his personal characteristics just as if he were writing a long letter to a friend. He may conceal some things which he wishes to keep from the public, and altogether he may give too favorable a view of his conduct and his achievements. This is a frailty of human nature for which a reader must make due allowance. In the case of Gibbon, however, the words of the author need not be greatly discounted; rarely reticent, he portrays himself as he was with all his weaknesses as well as all his admirable qualities. He could not of course put into a brief autobiography every important event of his career, had he wished to do so. His aim was to give so much of his life as would be necessary to understanding his "moral and literary character." Within these limits he was frank and complete; without reserve he criticized himself much as he would have done had he been writing of another man. No more delightful autobiography has ever been written.

When Gibbon sat down to *The Memoirs of My Own Life,* he had already published *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* in six large volumes, a work whose fame has been enhanced rather than dimmed by time. Posterity, he rightly believed, would wish from his own hand "a sincere and simple narrative" of his life. For the curious he calls the roll of his ancestors and draws sketches of his father and mother and other members of their families. All his brothers and sisters died in infancy, his mother soon followed them, and he himself was barely brought through a frail childhood by the extreme care and watchfulness of a maiden

aunt, whom he describes as "the true mother of my mind as well as of my health"; for she guided his reading through many books, among which were his favorite *Arabian Nights* and Pope's translation of Homer. Owing to a nervous affection which crippled him for several years, his schooling was interrupted, and so when at the age of fifteen he entered Magdalen College, Oxford, he was poorly prepared in the studies required of him; but he had read widely, devouring any book in the family library that attracted his eye, and he had already become interested in Greek and Roman history, which he sought to reduce to coherency by the study of ancient geography and chronology. On his mind he thus engraved "the multitude of names and dates in a clear and indelible series," and laid, when a mere boy, the first foundations of the future historian.

But the Oxford of those days offered very little to a young enthusiast like Gibbon. Neglected by his tutors, he turned Roman Catholic and left the university after fourteen months which he describes as "the most idle and unprofitable" in his entire career. To cure the boy of Romanism, his father placed him in the care of a Protestant minister at Lausanne on Lake Geneva in Switzerland, where he spent five happy years, from the age of sixteen to twenty-one. Just as his own reasoning had led him to the Church of Rome, so his own reasoning, not the instruction of a tutor, soon led him back to Protestantism. Though not much given to close friendships, he formed "an intimate, lasting connection with Mr. Deyverdun, a young man of an amiable temper and excellent understanding." He fell in love, too, with a charming girl, whom, however, he did not marry; she became the wife of M. Necker, the financier and statesman—and the mother of Madame de Staël. He met Voltaire also, "the most extraordinary man of the age," with whose name the world has since linked the name of Gibbon. In the meantime, he learned the French language so as to speak and write it like a native, he studied logic and mathematics, and read prodigiously in the Latin Classics,—historians, poets, orators, and philosophers. From Cicero, more than from another, he derived his measured and dignified style; and from Pascal he learned how "to manage the weapon of grave and temperate irony." Without his knowing it, his

studies brought him every day nearer to the time when he would be prepared to write his own Roman history.

Called home just before reaching his majority, Gibbon divided his time for some years thereafter between his father's estate in the country and long visits to London. He served as Captain and Major in the Militia, entered Parliament, and was appointed a Lord Commissioner of Trade. All the time he read with unabated zeal, aspiring to follow in the footsteps of Robertson and Hume, the British historians whom he most admired. At length a journey to Rome gave him a magnificent theme. In his own memorable words: "It was at Rome, on the 15th of October, 1764, as I sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the bare-footed fryars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter, that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started to my mind." Four years later he began, while living in London, to collect the vast materials for such a history, reading everything in Greek and Latin that had a bearing on the decay of the Ancient Empire. "Many experiments," he says, "were made before I could hit the middle tone between a dull chronicle and a rhetorical declamation: three times did I compose the first chapter, and twice the second and third, before I was tolerably satisfied with their effect. In the remainder of the way I advanced with a more equal and easy pace; but the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters have been reduced by three successive revisals, from a large volume to their present size." Early in 1776, the first volume of the *Decline and Fall* appeared, and Gibbon woke to find himself famous.

He wrote two more volumes in London, and then he retired to Lausanne, where he had passed the formative period of his youth, to complete the great history. His house at Lausanne was a spacious mansion on the north side of the town, with gardens descending into meadows and vineyards down to the lake. There, as he tells us in an eloquent passage matching the one on his visit to Rome, he finished his labors: "It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June, 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page, in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a *berceau,* or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country,

the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on the recovery of my freedom, and, perhaps, the establishment of my fame."

In the last sentence written on that June evening while the moon shone in meridian splendor upon Lake Geneva, Gibbon modestly submitted the *Decline and Fall* to the judgment of the world, declaring as he did so, that it fell far short of his own wishes. He had been engaged, he said, upon the work for twenty continuous years. Surely but without haste he pursued his studies through each day, never extending them, except towards the last, into the night. There had been no fatigue either of mind or of body, so cheerful and serene was his temper. With the order and precision of nature almost, he quietly moved on to his goal; and never repining, he asked no aid from another hand. As each volume came from the press, the manuscript had been seen by no eyes except the printer's and his own. To Gibbon his career, despite disappointments, was a great and satisfying existence. He justly felt that he had drawn "a high prize in the lottery of life," where many who strive draw only blanks. But in Gibbon's career, chance really played a minor part. He became what he was by prolonged labor and study, by a determined struggle against "a natural disposition to repose rather than action." Thanks to him, we may read in his own beautiful English the story of his life, aptly mixed with wise comment upon all that makes in his opinion for success, contentment, and happiness in the world.

# GEORGE WASHINGTON

## THE LIBERATOR OF AMERICA

## 1732-1799

### (INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

Washington was a man of action rather than words, and we have no evidence that he ever even thought of sitting down to write the story of his life. He kept journals of all his private travels, but these are mere itineraries of events. Once, however, on the occasion of his first public enterprise, Washington kept an official journal. This was written at the early age of twenty-one when he had been commissioned by the Governor of Virginia to bear a message of protest to the French who were seizing possession of the Ohio valley. Most of this journal is, like the others, an impersonal record of the work done; but there are a few passages in which the bold young messenger and explorer sharply reveals himself as the resolute hero of the future. These personal passages are given here.

There was a similar journal or diary kept by Washington when only a year later he was again dispatched, this time as leader of a military expedition, into the Ohio valley. It was on this occasion that the young commander fought the first skirmish of the French and Indian War. He was driven back to Virginia, his diary was captured with his other effects; and it was published by the French as evidence that the British-Americans were the offenders in opening the war. Washington himself, however, declared that the captors had so altered and falsified his record as to make it wholly unlike the original.

Hence for any further genuine self-revelation by the great liberator of America, we must turn to his letters. Even these are seldom personal; only one brief letter to his fiancée has survived to us, and one further letter when she had become his wife, a touching and tender appeal indeed. This single letter to his wife has hence a unique and remarkable value. It, and the few letters to other intimates here presented with it, have preserved for us a striking picture of the hero's private character, his likes and dislikes, and his personal experience of joy and sorrow.

Washington was born in Westmoreland County, Virginia, in 1732, a member of the rich land-owning aristocracy of the colony. His father, Augustine Washington, died when George was scarcely eleven years old, and the lad was left to the care of an older half-brother, Lawrence Wash-

ington. Lawrence virtually adopted his young brother, and the lad not only grew to manhood on Lawrence's estate at Mount Vernon, but later inherited the property, both Lawrence and his one child dying early. It was as the wealthy owner of Mount Vernon and the chief American soldier in the victorious French and Indian War that Washington met and wooed the wealthy young widow, Martha Custis. They were wedded in 1759; and their joint fortunes and position ranked them among the wealthiest and most honored gentry of America. For over fifteen years they lived, with her two children by her former marriage, a peaceful happy life of retired ease, until Washington's countrymen appealed to him to lead them in the Revolution. The remainder of his glorious career is the familiar heritage of the American people.

### FROM WASHINGTON'S OFFICIAL REPORT OF HIS EXPEDITION AMONG THE FRENCH AND INDIANS ALONG THE OHIO IN 1753

Our horses were now so weak and feeble, and the baggage so heavy, as we were obliged to provide all the necessaries which the journey would require, that we doubted much their performing it [the return journey]. Therefore myself and others, except the drivers, who were obliged to ride, gave up our horses for packs to assist along with the baggage. I put myself in an Indian walking dress, and continued with them three days, until I found there was no probability of their getting home in a reasonable time. The horses became less able to travel every day; the cold increased very fast; and the roads were becoming much worse by a deep snow, continually freezing; therefore, as I was uneasy to get back to make report of my proceedings to his Honor the Governor, I determined to prosecute my journey the nearest way through the woods on foot. Accordingly, I left Mr. Van Braam in charge of our baggage, with money and directions to provide necessaries from place to place for themselves and horses, and to make the most convenient dispatch in traveling.

I took my necessary papers, pulled off my clothes, and tied myself up in a watch-coat. Then, with gun in hand, and pack on my back, in which were my papers and provisions, I set out with Mr. Gist, fitted in the same manner, on Wednesday, the 26th [December]. The day following, just after we had passed a place called Murdering Town (where we intended to quit the path and steer across the country for

Shanapin's Town), we fell in with a party of French Indians who had lain in wait for us. One of them fired at Mr. Gist or me, not fifteen steps off, but fortunately missed. We took this fellow into custody, and kept him until about nine o'clock at night, then let him go, and walked all the remaining part of the night without making any stop, that we might get the start so far as to be out of reach of pursuit the next day, since we were well assured they would follow our track as soon as it was light. The next day we continued traveling until quite dark, and got to the river about two miles above Shanapin's. We expected to have found the river frozen, but it was not, only about fifty yards from each shore. The ice, I suppose, had broken up above, for it was driving in vast quantities.

There was no way for getting over but on a raft, which we set about making, with but one poor hatchet, and finished just after sunsetting. This was a whole day's work. We next got it launched, then went on board and set off, but before we were half way over, we were jammed in the ice in such a manner that we expected every moment our raft to sink, and ourselves to perish. I put out my setting pole to try and stop the raft, that the ice might pass by, when the rapidity of the stream threw it with so much violence against the pole, that it jerked me out into ten feet of water; but I fortunately saved myself by catching hold of one of the raft logs. Notwithstanding all our efforts, we could not get to either shore, but were obliged, as we were near an island, to quit our raft and make to it.

The cold was so extremely severe that Mr. Gist had all his fingers and some of his toes frozen, and the water was shut up so hard that we found no difficulty in getting off the island the next morning on the ice, and went to Mr. Frazier's.

### WASHINGTON'S LETTER TO HIS FIANCÉE

[Written when he was leading the Colonial troops in the British military attack on the Ohio valley in 1758.]

July 10, 1758.

We have begun our march for the Ohio. A courier is starting for Williamsburg and I embrace the opportunity to send a

few words to one whose life is now inseparable from mine. Since that happy hour when we made our pledges to each other, my thoughts have been continually going to you as another Self. That an all-powerful Providence may keep us both in safety is the prayer of your ever faithful and affectionate friend.

### THE ONLY EXTANT LETTER OF WASHINGTON TO HIS WIFE

[Written in 1775 when he was made commander-in-chief of the army of the revolting colonies.]

Philadelphia, June 18, 1775.

MY DEAREST:

I am now set down to write you on a subject which fills me with inexpressible concern, and this concern is greatly aggravated and increased, when I reflect upon the uneasiness I know it will give you. It has been determined in Congress, that the whole army raised for the defense of the American cause shall be put under my care, and that it is necessary for me to proceed immediately to Boston to take upon me the command of it.

You may believe me, my dear Patsy, when I assure you, in the most solemn manner, that, so far from seeking this appointment, I have used every endeavor in my power to avoid it, not only from my unwillingness to part with you and the family, but from a consciousness of its being a trust too great for my capacity; and that I should enjoy more real happiness in one month with you at home, than I have the most distant prospect of finding abroad, if my stay were to be seven times seven years. But as it has been a kind of destiny that has thrown me upon this service, I shall hope that my undertaking it is designed to answer some good purpose.

You might, and I suppose did perceive, from the tenor of my letters, that I was apprehensive I could not avoid this appointment, as I did not pretend to intimate when I should return. That was the case. It was utterly out of my power to refuse this appointment, without exposing my character to such censures as would reflect dishonor upon myself, and give pain to my friends. This, I am sure, could not, and

ought not, to be pleasing to you, and must have lessened me considerably in my own esteem.

I shall rely confidently on that Providence which has heretofore preserved and been bountiful to me, not doubting but that I shall return safe to you in the fall. I shall feel no pain from the toil or danger of the campaign; my unhappiness will flow from the uneasiness I know you will feel from being left alone. I therefore beg that you will summon your whole fortitude, and pass your time as agreeably as possible. Nothing will give me so much sincere satisfaction as to hear this, and to hear it from your own pen.

### A LETTER ON ASSUMING COMMAND OF THE AMERICAN ARMY

[Written to his brother, John Washington, in 1775.]

Philadelphia, June 20, 1775.

DEAR BROTHER:

I am now to bid adieu to you, and to every kind of domestic ease, for a while. I am embarked on a wide ocean, boundless in its prospect, and in which, perhaps, no safe harbor is to be found. I have been called upon by the unanimous voice of the Colonies to take the command of the Continental army; an honor I neither sought after, nor desired, as I am thoroughly convinced that it requires great abilities, and much more experience, than I am master of, to conduct a business so extensive in its nature, and arduous in the execution. I shall hope that my friends will visit, and endeavor to keep up the spirits of my wife, as much as they can, for my departure will, I know, be a cutting stroke upon her; and on this account alone I have many disagreeable sensations.

### LETTERS ON WASHINGTON'S TROUBLES AS A GENERAL

[Written in 1776 to his friend Colonel Reed, from the headquarters of the army besieging Boston.]

January 4, 1776.

It is easier to conceive than to describe the situation of my mind for some time past, and my feelings under our present circumstances. Search the vast volumes of history through, and I much question whether a case similar to ours is to be

found; namely, to maintain a post against the flower of the British troops for six months together, without powder, and at the end of them to have one army disbanded and another raised within the same distance (musket shot) of a reënforced enemy. It is too much to attempt. What may be the issue of the last maneuver, time only can unfold. I wish this month were well over our head. . . . We are now left with a good deal less than half-raised regiments, and about five thousand militia, who only stand engaged to the middle of this month; when, according to custom, they will depart, let the necessity of their stay be never so urgent. Thus it is, for more than two months past, I have scarcely emerged from one difficulty before I have been plunged in another. How it will end, God, in His great goodness, will direct. I am thankful for His protection to this time. We are told that we shall soon get the army completed, but I have been told so many things which have never come to pass, that I distrust everything.

January 14, 1776.

The hints you have communicated from time to time not only deserve, but do most sincerely and cordially meet with my thanks. You cannot render a more acceptable service, nor in my estimation give a more convincing proof of your friendship, than by a free, open, and undisguised account of every matter relative to myself or conduct. The man who wishes to stand well in the opinion of others must do this; because he is thereby enabled to correct his faults, or remove prejudices which are imbibed against him. For this reason, I shall thank you for giving me the opinion of the world upon such points as you know me to be interested in; for, as I have but one capital object in view, I could wish to make my conduct coincide with the wishes of mankind, as far as I can consistently, I mean without departing from that great line of duty, which though hid under a cloud for some time, from a peculiarity of circumstances, may nevertheless bear a scrutiny. My constant attention to the great and perplexing objects which continually rise to my view, absorbs all lesser considerations, and indeed scarcely allows me time to reflect that there is such a body in existence as the General Court of this colony, but when I am reminded of it by a committee;

nor can I, upon recollection, discover in what instances (I wish they would be more explicit) I have been inattentive to, or slighted them. They could not, surely, conceive that there was a propriety in unbosoming the secrets of an army to them; that it was necessary to ask their opinion of throwing up an intrenchment, forming a battalion, etc.

### WASHINGTON'S VIEWS OF AN AGRICULTURAL LIFE

[Written in 1788 to Arthur Young, an English author who presented his books on agriculture to General Washington.]

SIR: Mount Vernon, December 4, 1788.

I have been favored with the receipt of your letter dated the first day of July; and have to express my thanks for the three additional volumes of the Annals, which have also come safely to hand.

The more I am acquainted with agricultural affairs, the better I am pleased with them; insomuch, that I can nowhere find so great satisfaction as in those innocent and useful pursuits. In indulging these feelings, I am led to reflect how much more delightful to an undebauched mind is the task of making improvements on the earth than all the vain glory which can be acquired from ravaging it by the most uninterrupted career of conquests. The design of this observation is only to show how much, as a member of human society, I feel myself obliged by your labors to render respectable and advantageous an employment which is more congenial to the natural dispositions of mankind than any other.

As to what you suggest at the close of your letter, respecting the publication of extracts from my correspondence, in your Annals, I hardly know what to say. I certainly highly approve the judicious execution of your well-conceived project of throwing light on a subject, which may be more conducive than almost any other to the happiness of mankind. On the one hand, it seems scarcely generous or proper that any farmer who receives benefit from the facts contained in such publications should withhold his mite of information from the general stock. On the other hand, I am afraid it might

be imputed to me as a piece of ostentation, if my name should appear in the work. And surely it would not be discreet for me to run the hazard of incurring this imputation, unless some good might probably result to society, as some kind of compensation for it. Of this I am not a judge—I can only say for myself, that I have endeavored, in a state of tranquil retirement, to keep myself as much from the eye of the world as I possibly could. I have studiously avoided, as much as was in my power, to give any cause for ill-natured or impertinent comments on my conduct; and I should be very unhappy to have anything done on my behalf (however distant in itself from impropriety) which should give occasion for one officious tongue to use my name with indelicacy. For I wish most devoutly to glide silently and unnoticed through the remainder of life. This is my heart-felt wish, and these are my undisguised feelings. After having submitted them confidentially to you, I have such a reliance upon your prudence as to leave it with you to do what you think, upon a full consideration of the matter, shall be wisest and best. I am, with very great regard and esteem, Sir,

Your most obedient and obliged humble servant,

G. WASHINGTON.

ARTHUR YOUNG, ESQ.

### A LETTER ON LOVE AND MATRIMONY

[Written in 1795 to Eleanor Custis, the daughter of his step-son. Washington, having married a widow, adopted her children as his own, and treated them and their children of the next generation with devoted affection.]

Philadelphia, January 16, 1795.

Men and women feel the same inclination toward each other now that they always have done, and which they will continue to do, until there is a new order of things; and you, as others have done, may find that the passions of your sex are easier raised than allayed. Do not, therefore, boast too soon, nor too strongly of your insensibility to, or a resistance of, its powers. In the composition of the human frame there is a good deal of inflammable material, however dormant it may be for a time, and like an intimate acquaintance of yours,

when the torch is put to it that which is within you may burst into a blaze.

Love is said to be an involuntary passion, and it is therefore contended that it cannot be resisted. This is true in part only, for like all things else, when nourished and supplied plentifully with aliment, it is rapid in its progress; but let these be withdrawn, and it may be stifled in its birth, or much stinted in its growth. For example (the same may be said of the other sex) a young woman, beautiful and accomplished, will, while her hand and heart are undisposed of, turn the heads and set the circle in which she moves on fire. Let her marry and what is the consequence? The madness ceases, and all is quiet again. Why? Not because there is any diminution in the charms of the lady, but because there is an end of hope. Hence it follows that love may be and therefore ought to be under the guidance of reason, for, although we cannot avoid first impressions, we may assuredly place them under guard; and my motives for troubling you are to show you, while you remain Eleanor Parke Custis, spinster, and retain the resolution to love with moderation, at least until you have secured your game, the way by which it may be accomplished.

When the fire is beginning to kindle and your heart growing warm, propound these questions to it. Who is this invader? Have I competent knowledge of him? Is he a man of good character? A man of sense? For, be assured, a sensible woman can never be happy with a fool. What has been his walk in life? Is his fortune sufficient to maintain me in the manner I have been accustomed to live, and my sisters do live? And is he one to whom my friends can have no reasonable objection? If all these interrogatories can be satisfactorily answered, there will remain but one more to be asked; that, however, is an important one. Have I sufficient ground to conclude that his affections are engaged by me? Without this the heart of sensibility will struggle against a passion that is not reciprocated—delicacy, custom, or call it by what epithet you will, have precluded all advances on your part. The declaration, without the most indirect invitation of yours, must proceed from the man, to render it permanent and valuable, and nothing short of good sense and an easy,

unaffected conduct can draw the line between prudery and coquetry.

### A LETTER ON DEATH

[Written in the closing months of Washington's life to his friend Col. Ball, who had notified him of the death of Charles Washington.]

Mt. Vernon, Sept. 22d, 1799.

DEAR SIR:

Your letter of the 16th inst. has been received, informing me of the death of my brother.

The death of near relations always produces awful and affecting emotions, under whatsoever circumstances it may happen. That of my brother has been so long expected, and his latter days so uncomfortable to himself, must have prepared all around him for the stroke, though painful in the effect.

I was the first, and am now the last of my father's children by the second marriage who remain.

When I shall be called upon to follow them is known only to the Giver of Life. When the summons comes I shall endeavor to obey it with a good grace.

Mrs. Washington has been and still is very much indisposed, but unites with me in best wishes for you, Mrs. Ball, and family.

With great esteem and regard, I am, Dear Sir, your affection'te serv't

G° WASHINGTON.

THE END

GIBBON

# EDWARD GIBBON

## THE CHIEF HISTORIAN OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

## 1737-1794

### (INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

Eighteenth century London had no more singular figure among its celebrated men of letters than the author of the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." Physically, he was a pigmy, fat and rather pompous, while mentally he was a giant. Born well to do, he never had to worry about his daily bread, as had many of his literary contemporaries. Nevertheless he worked, and worked hard. Any one reading his autobiography will realize this fact for, in the main, it is concerned with the conception and development of his stupendous history. In fact it has been called the key to the "Decline and Fall," and should be read in connection with that masterpiece. But the autobiography is far from being simply a commentary on this classic work. It possesses a very human charm, showing the historian in all his harmless vanity and little conceits; yet, devoted to truth, he never attempts to excuse any of his foibles. If one is struck by any outstanding quality of the autobiography, it is its unaffectedness and candor. He does not seem to desire to win the love or esteem of his readers, but one is all the more impressed because of his impartiality and accuracy. Though we may not love him, we find him a most original and interesting character, a man whose indefatigable zeal and labor command our admiration.

Critics have found fault with Gibbon for saying so little of his illustrious contemporaries in the autobiography, but inasmuch as he was bent upon his own intellectual portrait, a gallery of friends and acquaintances would have been foreign to his purpose. Besides, we suspect that he was not overinterested in the mortals about him, brilliant as many of them were. Socially, however, he was alight when he felt his circle *simpatica,* and could then display the treasures of his mind. In public, on the contrary, he remained consistently dumb, and in Parliament he was no better than a wooden man.

The autobiography was begun only a few years before his death, and it was left in fragmentary condition, but Gibbon's best friend, Lord Sheffield, put it together as well as any other than Gibbon could. As nothing is said of the writer's death in the autobiography, we may say here that

Gibbon died of a long-neglected rupture, or hernia, which developed into a severe dropsical condition. Owing to his sensitiveness or vanity Gibbon would not allude to this infirmity even to physicians, until it was too late. That was one of his queer quirks of mind.

Finally, we will quote Phillips Brooks on the worth of this great autobiography of Edward Gibbon: "English literature is rich in autobiography. It has, indeed, no tale so deep and subtle as that which is told in the 'Confessions of St. Augustine.' It has no such complete and unreserved unbosoming of a life as is given by the strange Italian, Benvenuto Cellini, who is the prince of unconcealment. But there is hardly any self-told tale in any language which is more attractive than the autobiography of Edward Gibbon, in which he recounts the story of his own career in the same stately, pure prose in which he narrates the 'Decline and Fall of Rome.'"

## MEMOIRS OF MY LIFE AND WRITINGS

In the fifty-second year of my age, after the completion of an arduous and successful work, I now propose to employ some moments of my leisure in reviewing the simple transactions of a private and literary life. Truth, naked, unblushing truth, the first virtue of more serious history, must be the sole recommendation of this personal narrative. The style shall be simple and familiar: but style is the image of character; and the habits of correct writing may produce, without labor or design, the appearance of art and study. My own amusement is my motive, and will be my reward: and if these sheets are communicated to some discreet and indulgent friends, they will be secreted from the public eye till the author shall be removed beyond the reach of criticism or ridicule.

A lively desire of knowing and of recording our ancestors so generally prevails, that it must depend on the influence of some common principle in the minds of men. We seem to have lived in the persons of our forefathers; it is the labor and reward of vanity to extend the term of this ideal longevity. Our imagination is always active to enlarge the narrow circle in which nature has confined us. Fifty or a hundred years may be allotted to an individual; but we step forward beyond death with such hopes as religion and philosophy will suggest; and we fill up the silent vacancy that precedes our birth, by associating ourselves to the authors of our

existence. Our calmer judgment will rather tend to moderate, than to suppress, the pride of an ancient and worthy race. The satirist may laugh, the philosopher may preach, but Reason herself will respect the prejudices and habits which have been consecrated by the experience of mankind. Few there are who can sincerely despise in others an advantage of which they are secretly ambitious to partake. The knowledge of our own family from a remote period will be always esteemed as an abstract preëminence, since it can never be promiscuously enjoyed; but the longest series of peasants and mechanics would not afford much gratification to the pride of their descendant. We wish to discover our ancestors, but we wish to discover them possessed of ample fortunes, adorned with honorable titles, and holding an eminent rank in the class of hereditary nobles, which has been maintained for the wisest and most beneficial purposes, in almost every climate of the globe, and in almost every modification of political society.

Wherever the distinction of birth is allowed to form a superior order in the state, education and example should always, and will often, produce among them a dignity of sentiment and propriety of conduct, which is guarded from dishonor by their own and the public esteem. If we read of some illustrious line, so ancient that it has no beginning, so worthy that it ought to have no end, we sympathize in its various fortunes; nor can we blame the generous enthusiasm, or even the harmless vanity, of those who are allied to the honors of its name. For my own part, could I draw my pedigree from a general, a statesman, or a celebrated author, I should study their lives with the diligence of filial love. In the investigation of past events our curiosity is stimulated by the immediate or indirect reference to ourselves; but in the estimate of honor we should learn to value the gifts of nature above those of fortune; to esteem in our ancestors the qualities that best promote the interests of society; and to pronounce the descendant of a king less truly noble than the offspring of a man of genius, whose writings will instruct or delight the latest posterity. The family of Confucius is, in my opinion, the most illustrious in the world. After a painful ascent of eight or ten centuries, our barons and

princes of Europe are lost in the darkness of the middle ages; but, in the vast equality of the empire of China, the posterity of Confucius have maintained, above two thousand two hundred years, their peaceful honors and perpetual succession. The chief of the family is still revered, by the sovereign and the people, as the lively image of the wisest of mankind.

That these sentiments are just, or at least natural, I am the more inclined to believe, as I am not myself interested in the cause; for I can derive from my ancestors neither glory nor shame. Yet a sincere and simple narrative of my own life may amuse some of my leisure hours; but it will subject me, and perhaps with justice, to the imputation of vanity. I may judge, however, from the experience both of past and of the present times, that the public are always curious to know the men who have left behind them any image of their minds: the most scanty accounts of such men are compiled with diligence, and perused with eagerness; and the student of every class may derive a lesson, or an example, from the lives most similar to his own. My name may hereafter be placed among the thousand articles of a Biographia Britannica; and I must be conscious that no one is so well qualified as myself to describe the series of my thoughts and actions. The authority of my masters, of the grave Thuanus, and the philosophic Hume, might be sufficient to justify my design; but it would not be difficult to produce a long list of ancients and moderns, who, in various forms, have exhibited their own portraits. Such portraits are often the most interesting, and sometimes the only interesting parts of their writings; and, if they be sincere, we seldom complain of the minuteness or prolixity of these personal memorials. The lives of the younger Pliny, of Petrarch, and of Erasmus are expressed in the epistles which they themselves have given to the world. The essays of Montaigne and Sir William Temple bring us home to the houses and bosoms of the authors: we smile without contempt at the headstrong passions of Benvenuto Cellini, and the gay follies of Colley Cibber. The confessions of St. Austin and Rousseau disclose the secrets of the human heart; the commentaries of the learned Huet have survived his evangelical demonstration;

and the memoirs of Goldoni are more truly dramatic than his Italian comedies. The heretic and the churchman are strongly marked in the characters and fortunes of Whiston and Bishop Newton; and even the dullness of Michael de Marolles and Anthony Wood acquires some value from the faithful representation of men and manners. That I am equal or superior to some of these, the effects of modesty or affectation cannot force me to dissemble.

My family is originally derived from the county of Kent. The southern district, which borders on Sussex and the sea, was formerly overspread with the great forest Anderida, and even now retains the denomination of the *Weald,* or Woodland. In this district, and in the hundred and parish of Rolvenden, the Gibbons were possessed of lands in the year one thousand three hundred and twenty-six; and the elder branch of the family, without much increase or diminution of property, still adheres to its native soil. Fourteen years after the first appearance of his name, John Gibbon is recorded as the Marmorarius or architect of King Edward the Third: the strong and stately castle of Queensborough, which guarded the entrance of the Medway, was a monument of his skill; and the grant of an hereditary toll on the passage from Sandwich to Stonar, in the Isle of Thanet, is the reward of no vulgar artist. In the visitations of the heralds the Gibbons are frequently mentioned: they held the rank of Esquire in an age when that title was less promiscuously assumed: one of them, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, was captain of the militia of Kent; and a free school, in the neighboring town of Benenden, proclaims the charity and opulence of its founder. But time, or their own obscurity, has cast a veil of oblivion over the virtues and vices of my Kentish ancestors; their character or station confined them to the labors and pleasures of a rural life: nor is it in my power to follow the advice of the poet, in an inquiry after a name—

> "Go! search it there, where to be born, and die,
> Of rich and poor makes all the history"—

so recent is the institution of our parish registers. In the beginning of the seventeenth century a younger branch of the Gibbons of Rolvenden migrated from the country to the

city; and from this branch I do not blush to descend. The law requires some abilities; the church imposes some restraints; and before our army and navy, our civil establishments, and India empire, had opened so many paths of fortune, the mercantile profession was more frequently chosen by youths of a liberal race and education, who aspired to create their own independence. Our most respectable families have not disdained the counting-house, or even the shop; their names are enrolled in the Livery and Companies of London; and in England, as well as in the Italian commonwealths, heralds have been compelled to declare that gentility is not degraded by the exercise of trade.

The successful industry of my grandfather raised him above the level of his immediate ancestors; he appears to have launched into various and extensive dealings: even his opinions were subordinate to his interest; and I find him in Flanders clothing King William's troops, while he would have contracted with more pleasure, though not perhaps at a cheaper rate, for the service of King James. During his residence abroad, his concerns at home were managed by his mother Hester, an active and notable woman. Her second husband was a widower of the name of Acton: they united the children of their first nuptials. After his marriage with the daughter of Richard Acton, goldsmith in Leadenhall Street, he gave his own sister to Sir Whitmore Acton, of Aldenham; and I am thus connected, by a triple alliance, with that ancient and loyal family of Shropshire baronets. It consisted about that time of seven brothers, all of gigantic stature; one of whom, a pigmy of six feet two inches, confessed himself the last and the least of the seven; adding, in the true spirit of party, that such men were not born since the Revolution. Under the Tory administration of the four last years of Queen Anne (1710-1714), Mr. Edward Gibbon was appointed one of the Commissioners of the Customs; he sat at that board with Prior: but the merchant was better qualified for his station than the poet; since Lord Bolingbroke has been heard to declare that he had never conversed with a man who more clearly understood the commerce and finances of England. In the year 1716 he was elected one of the directors of the South Sea Company; and his books ex-

hibited the proof that, before his acceptance of this fatal office, he had acquired an independent fortune of sixty thousand pounds.

But his fortune was overwhelmed in the shipwreck of the year twenty, and the labors of thirty years were blasted in a single day. Of the use or abuse of the South Sea scheme, of the guilt or innocence of my grandfather and his brother directors, I am neither a competent nor a disinterested judge. Yet the equity of modern times must condemn the violent and arbitrary proceedings, which would have disgraced the cause of justice, and would render injustice still more odious. No sooner had the nation awakened from its golden dream than a popular and even a parliamentary clamor demanded their victims: but it was acknowledged on all sides that the South Sea Directors, however guilty, could not be touched by any known laws of the land. The speech of Lord Molesworth, the author of *The State of Denmark*, may show the temper, or rather the intemperance, of the House of Commons. "Extraordinary crimes (exclaimed that ardent Whig) call aloud for extraordinary remedies. The Roman lawgivers had not foreseen the possible existence of a parricide: but as soon as the first monster appeared, he was sewn in a sack, and cast headlong into the river; and I shall be content to inflict the same treatment on the authors of our present ruin." His motion was not literally adopted; but a bill of pains and penalties was introduced, a retroactive statute, to punish the offenses, which did not exist at the time they were committed. Such a pernicious violation of liberty and law can be excused only by the most imperious necessity; nor could it be defended on this occasion by the plea of impending danger or useful example. The legislature restrained the persons of the directors, imposed an exorbitant security for their appearance, and marked their characters with a previous note of ignominy: they were compelled to deliver, upon oath, the strict value of their estates; and were disabled from making any transfer or alienation of any part of their property. Against a bill of pains and penalties it is the common right of every subject to be heard by his counsel at the bar: they prayed to be heard; their prayer was refused; and their oppressors, who required no evidence, would listen to no defense. It had

been at first proposed that one-eighth of their respective estates should be allowed for the future support of the directors; but it was speciously urged, that, in the various shades of opulence and guilt, such an unequal proportion would be too light for many, and for some might possibly be too heavy. The character and conduct of each man were separately weighed; but, instead of the calm solemnity of a judicial inquiry, the fortune and honor of three and thirty Englishmen were made the topic of hasty conversation, the sport of a lawless majority; and the basest member of the committee, by a malicious word or a silent vote, might indulge his general spleen or personal animosity. Injury was aggravated by insult, and insult was embittered by pleasantry. Allowances of twenty pounds, or one shilling, were facetiously moved. A vague report that a director had formerly been concerned in *another* project, by which some unknown persons had lost their money, was admitted as a proof of his actual guilt. One man was ruined because he had dropped a foolish speech, that his horses should feed upon gold; another because he was grown so proud, that, one day at the Treasury, he had refused a civil answer to persons much above him. All were condemned, absent and unheard, in arbitrary fines and forfeitures, which swept away the greatest part of their substance. Such bold oppression can scarcely be shielded by the omnipotence of parliament: and yet it may be seriously questioned whether the judges of the South Sea Directors were the true and legal representatives of their country. The first parliament of George the First had been chosen (1715) for three years: the term had elapsed, their trust was expired; and the four additional years (1718-1722), during which they continued to sit, were derived not from the people, but from themselves; from the strong measure of the Septennial Bill, which can only be paralleled by *il serrar di consiglio* of the Venetian history. Yet candor will own that to the same parliament every Englishman is deeply indebted: the Septennial Act, so vicious in its origin, has been sanctioned by time, experience, and the national consent. Its first operation secured the House of Hanover on the throne, and its permanent influence maintains the peace and stability of government. As often as a repeal has been moved in the

House of Commons, I have given in its defense a clear and conscientious vote.

My grandfather could not expect to be treated with more lenity than his companions. His Tory principles and connections rendered him obnoxious to the ruling powers: his name is reported in a suspicious secret; and his well-known abilities could not plead the excuse of ignorance or error. In the first proceedings against the South Sea Directors, Mr. Gibbon is one of the few who were taken into custody; and, in the final sentence, the measure of his fine proclaims him eminently guilty. The total estimate which he delivered on oath to the House of Commons amounted to one hundred and six thousand five hundred and forty-three pounds, five shillings, and sixpence, exclusive of antecedent settlements. Two different allowances of fifteen and of ten thousand pounds were moved for Mr. Gibbon; but, on the question being put, it was carried without a division for the smaller sum. On these ruins, with the skill and credit of which parliament had not been able to despoil him, my grandfather, at a mature age, erected the edifice of a new fortune: the labors of sixteen years were amply rewarded; and I have reason to believe that the second structure was not much inferior to the first. He had realized a very considerable property in Sussex, Hampshire, Buckinghamshire, and the New River Company; and had acquired a spacious house, with gardens and lands, at Putney, in Surrey, where he resided in decent hospitality. He died in December 1736, at the age of seventy; and by his last will, at the expense of Edward, his only son (with whose marriage he was not perfectly reconciled), enriched his two daughters, Catherine and Hester. The former became the wife of Mr. Edward Elliston: their daughter and heiress, Catherine, was married in the year 1756 to Edward Eliot, Esq. (now Lord Eliot), of Port Eliot, in the county of Cornwall; and their three sons are my nearest male relations on the father's side. A life of devotion and celibacy was the choice of my aunt, Mrs. Hester Gibbon, who, at the age of eighty-five, still resides in a hermitage at Cliffe, in Northamptonshire, having long survived her spiritual guide and faithful companion, Mr. William Law, who, at an advanced age, about the year 1761, died in her house. In our family he had

left the reputation of a worthy and pious man, who believed all that he professed, and practiced all that he enjoined.

My father, Edward Gibbon, was born in October 1707: at the age of thirteen he could scarcely feel that he was disinherited by Act of Parliament; and, as he advanced towards manhood, new prospects of fortune opened to his view. A parent is most attentive to supply in his children the deficiencies of which he is conscious in himself: my grandfather's knowledge was derived from a strong understanding, and the experience of the ways of men; but my father enjoyed the benefits of a liberal education as a scholar and a gentleman. At Westminster School, and afterwards at Emmanuel College in Cambridge, he passed through a regular course of academical discipline; and the care of his learning and morals was entrusted to his private tutor, the same Mr. William Law. But the mind of a saint is above or below the present world; and while the pupil proceeded on his travels, the tutor remained at Putney, the much-honored friend and spiritual director of the whole family. My father resided some time at Paris to acquire the fashionable exercises; and as his temper was warm and social, he indulged in those pleasures for which the strictness of his former education had given him a keener relish. He afterwards visited several provinces of France; but his excursions were neither long nor remote; and the slender knowledge which he had gained of the French language was gradually obliterated. On my father's return to England he was chosen, in the general election of 1734, to serve in parliament for the borough of Petersfield; a burgage tenure, of which my grandfather possessed a weighty share, till he alienated (I know not why) such important property. In the opposition to Sir Robert Walpole and the Pelhams, prejudice and society connected his son with the Tories—shall I say Jacobites? or, as they were pleased to style themselves, the country gentlemen. With them he gave many a vote; with them he drank many a bottle. Without acquiring the fame of an orator or a statesman, he eagerly joined in the great opposition which, after a seven years' chase, hunted down Sir Robert Walpole: and, in the pursuit of an unpopular minister, he gratified a private revenge

against the oppressor of his family in the South Sea persecution.

I was born at Putney, in the county of Surrey, the 27th of April, O.S., in the year one thousand seven hundred and thirty-seven; the first child of the marriage of Edward Gibbon, Esq., and of Judith Porten. My lot might have been that of a slave, a savage, or a peasant; nor can I reflect without pleasure on the bounty of nature, which cast my birth in a free and civilized country, in an age of science and philosophy, in a family of honorable rank, and decently endowed with the gifts of fortune. From my birth I have enjoyed the right of primogeniture; but I was succeeded by five brothers and one sister, all of whom were snatched away in their infancy. My five brothers, whose names may be found in the parish register of Putney, I shall not pretend to lament: but from my childhood to the present hour I have deeply and sincerely regretted my sister, whose life was somewhat prolonged, and whom I remember to have been an amiable infant. The relation of a brother and a sister, especially if they do not marry, appears to me of a very singular nature. It is a familiar and tender friendship with a female, much about our own age; an affection perhaps softened by the secret influence of sex, but pure from any mixture of sensual desire, the sole species of platonic love that can be indulged with truth, and without danger.

At the general election of 1741 Mr. Gibbon and Mr. Delmé stood an expensive and successful contest at Southampton, against Mr. Dummer and Mr. Henly, afterwards Lord Chancellor and Earl of Northington. The Whig candidates had a majority of the resident voters; but the corporation was firm in the Tory interest: a sudden creation of one hundred and seventy new freemen turned the scale; and a supply was readily obtained of respectable volunteers, who flocked from all parts of England to support the cause of their political friends. The new parliament opened with the victory of an opposition which was fortified by strong clamor and strange coalitions. From the event of the first divisions, Sir Robert Walpole perceived that he could no longer lead a majority in the House of Commons, and prudently resigned (after a dominion of one and twenty years) the guidance of the state

(1742). But the fall of an unpopular minister was not succeeded, according to general expectation, by a millennium of happiness and virtue: some courtiers lost their places, some patriots lost their characters, Lord Orford's offenses vanished with his power; and after a short vibration, the Pelham government was fixed on the old basis of the Whig aristocracy. In the year 1745 the throne and the constitution were attacked by a rebellion which does not reflect much honor on the national spirit; since the English friends of the Pretender wanted courage to join his standard, and his enemies (the bulk of the people) allowed him to advance into the heart of the kingdom. Without daring, perhaps without desiring, to aid the rebels, my father invariably adhered to the Tory opposition. In the most critical season he accepted, for the service of the party, the office of alderman in the city of London: but the duties were so repugnant to his inclination and habits, that he resigned his gown at the end of a few months. The second parliament in which he sat was prematurely dissolved (1747): and as he was unable or unwilling to maintain a second contest for Southampton, the life of the senator expired in that dissolution.

The death of a new-born child before that of its parents may seem an unnatural, but it is strictly a probable event: since of any given number the greater part are extinguished before their ninth year, before they possess the faculties of the mind or body. Without accusing the profuse waste or imperfect workmanship of nature, I shall only observe that this unfavorable chance was multiplied against my infant existence. So feeble was my constitution, so precarious my life, that, in the baptism of my brothers, my father's prudence successively repeated my christian name of Edward, that, in case of the departure of the eldest son, this patronymic appellation might be still perpetuated in the family.

——Uno avulso non deficit alter.[1]

To preserve and to rear so frail a being, the most tender assiduity was scarcely sufficient; and my mother's attention was somewhat diverted by her frequent pregnancies, by an exclusive passion for her husband, and by the dissipation of

[1] One torn off, a second will not be lacking.—*Æneid* vi. 143.

the world, in which his taste and authority obliged her to mingle. But the maternal office was supplied by my aunt, Mrs. Catherine Porten; at whose name I feel a tear of gratitude trickling down my cheek. A life of celibacy transferred her vacant affection to her sister's first child: my weakness excited her pity; her attachment was fortified by labor and success: and if there be any, as I trust there are some, who rejoice that I live, to that dear and excellent woman they must hold themselves indebted. Many anxious and solitary days did she consume in the patient trial of every mode of relief and amusement. Many wakeful nights did she sit by my bedside in trembling expectation that each hour would be my last. Of the various and frequent disorders of my childhood my own recollection is dark; nor do I wish to expatiate on so disgusting a topic. Suffice it to say, that while every practitioner, from Sloane and Ward to the Chevalier Taylor, was successively summoned to torture or relieve me, the care of my mind was too frequently neglected for that of my health: compassion always suggested an excuse for the indulgence of the master, or the idleness of the pupil; and the chain of my education was broken as often as I was recalled from the school of learning to the bed of sickness.

As soon as the use of speech had prepared my infant reason for the admission of knowledge, I was taught the arts of reading, writing, and arithmetic. So remote is the date, so vague is the memory of their origin in myself, that, were not the error corrected by analogy, I should be tempted to conceive them as innate. In my childhood I was praised for the readiness with which I could multiply and divide, by memory alone, two sums of several figures: such praise encouraged my growing talent; and had I persevered in this line of application, I might have acquired some fame in mathematical studies.

After this previous institution at home, or at a day-school at Putney, I was delivered at the age of seven into the hands of Mr. John Kirkby, who exercised about eighteen months the office of my domestic tutor.

In my ninth year (January 1746), in a lucid interval of comparative health, my father adopted the convenient and customary mode of English education; and I was sent to Kingston-upon-Thames, to a school of about seventy boys

which was kept by Dr. Wooddeson and his assistants. Every time I have since passed over Putney Common, I have always noticed the spot where my mother, as we drove along in the coach, admonished me that I was now going into the world, and must learn to think and act for myself. The expression may appear ludicrous; yet there is not, in the course of life, a more remarkable change than the removal of a child from the luxury and freedom of a wealthy house to the frugal diet and strict subordination of a school; from the tenderness of parents, and the obsequiousness of servants, to the rude familiarity of his equals, the insolent tyranny of his seniors, and the rod, perhaps, of a cruel and capricious pedagogue. Such hardships may steel the mind and body against the injuries of fortune; but my timid reserve was astonished by the crowd and tumult of the school; the want of strength and activity disqualified me for the sports of the playfield; nor have I forgotten how often in the year forty-six I was reviled and buffeted for the sins of my Tory ancestors. By the common methods of discipline, at the expense of many tears and some blood, I purchased the knowledge of the Latin syntax: and not long since I was possessed of the dirty volumes of Phædrus and Cornelius Nepos, which I painfully construed and darkly understood.

My studies were too frequently interrupted by sickness; and after a real or nominal residence at Kingston school of near two years, I was finally recalled (December 1747) by my mother's death, which was occasioned, in her thirty-eighth year, by the consequences of her last labor. I was too young to feel the importance of my loss; and the image of her person and conversation is faintly imprinted in my memory. The affectionate heart of my aunt, Catherine Porten, bewailed a sister and a friend; but my poor father was inconsolable, and the transport of grief seemed to threaten his life or his reason. I can never forget the scene of our first interview, some weeks after the fatal event; the awful silence, the room hung with black, the mid-day tapers, his sighs and tears; his praises of my mother, a saint in heaven; his solemn adjuration that I would cherish her memory and imitate her virtues; and the fervor with which he kissed and blessed me as the sole surviving pledge of their loves. The storm of

passion insensibly subsided into calmer melancholy. At a convivial meeting of his friends, Mr. Gibbon might affect or enjoy a gleam of cheerfulness; but his plan of happiness was forever destroyed: and after the loss of his companion he was left alone in a world, of which the business and pleasures were to him irksome or insipid. After some unsuccessful trials he renounced the tumult of London and the hospitality of Putney, and buried himself in the rural or rather rustic solitude of Buriton; from which, during several years, he seldom emerged.

As far back as I can remember, the house, near Putney Bridge and churchyard, of my maternal grandfather, appears in the light of my proper and native home. It was there that I was allowed to spend the greatest part of my time, in sickness or in health, during my school vacations and my parents' residence in London, and finally after my mother's death. Three months after that event, in the spring of 1748, the commercial ruin of her father, Mr. James Porten, was accomplished and declared. As his effects were not sold, nor the house evacuated, till the Christmas following, I enjoyed during the whole year the society of my aunt, without much consciousness of her impending fate. I feel a melancholy pleasure in repeating my obligations to that excellent woman, Mrs. Catherine Porten, the true mother of my mind as well as of my health. Her natural good sense was improved by the perusal of the best books in the English language; and if her reason was sometimes clouded by prejudice, her sentiments were never disguised by hypocrisy or affectation. Her indulgent tenderness, the frankness of her temper, and my innate rising curiosity, soon removed all distance between us: like friends of an equal age, we freely conversed on every topic, familiar or abstruse; and it was her delight and reward to observe the first shoots of my young ideas. Pain and languor were often soothed by the voice of instruction and amusement; and to her kind lessons I ascribe my early and invincible love of reading, which I would not exchange for the treasures of India.

I should perhaps be astonished, were it possible to ascertain the date at which a favorite tale was engraved, by frequent repetition, in my memory: the Cavern of the Winds; the Pal-

ace of Felicity; and the fatal moment, at the end of three months or centuries, when Prince Adolphus is overtaken by Time, who had worn out so many pair of wings in the pursuit. Before I left Kingston school I was well acquainted with Pope's Homer and the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments,* two books which will always please by the moving picture of human manners and specious miracles: nor was I then capable of discerning that Pope's translation is a portrait endowed with every merit excepting that of likeness to the original. The verses of Pope accustomed my ear to the sound of poetic harmony: in the death of Hector, and the shipwreck of Ulysses, I tasted the new emotions of terror and pity; and seriously disputed with my aunt on the vices and virtues of the heroes of the Trojan war. From Pope's Homer to Dryden's Virgil was an easy transition; but I know not how, from some fault in the author, the translator, or the reader, the pious Æneas did not so forcibly seize on my imagination; and I derived more pleasure from Ovid's *Metamorphoses,* especially in the fall of Phaeton, and the speeches of Ajax and Ulysses. My grandfather's flight unlocked the door of a tolerable library; and I turned over many English pages of poetry and romance, of history and travels. Where a title attracted my eye, without fear or awe I snatched the volume from the shelf; and Mrs. Porten, who indulged herself in moral and religious speculations, was more prone to encourage than to check a curiosity above the strength of a boy. This year (1748), the twelfth of my age, I shall note as the most propitious to the growth of my intellectual stature.

The relics of my grandfather's fortune afforded a bare annuity for his own maintenance; and his daughter, my worthy aunt, who had already passed her fortieth year, was left destitute. Her noble spirit scorned a life of obligation and dependence; and after revolving several schemes, she preferred the humble industry of keeping a boarding-house for Westminster School, where she laboriously earned a competence for her old age. This singular opportunity of blending the advantages of private and public education decided my father. After the Christmas holidays, in January 1749, I accompanied Mrs. Porten to her new house in College Street; and was immediately entered in the school, of which

Dr. John Nicoll was at that time head-master. At first I was alone: but my aunt's resolution was praised; her character was esteemed; her friends were numerous and active: in the course of some years she became the mother of forty or fifty boys, for the most part of family and fortune; and as her primitive habitation was too narrow, she built and occupied a spacious mansion in Dean's Yard. I shall always be ready to join in the common opinion, that our public schools, which have produced so many eminent characters, are the best adapted to the genius and constitution of the English people. A boy of spirit may acquire a previous and practical experience of the world; and his playfellows may be the future friends of his heart or his interest. In a free intercourse with his equals, the habits of truth, fortitude, and prudence will insensibly be matured. Birth and riches are measured by the standard of personal merit; and the mimic scene of a rebellion has displayed in their true colors the ministers and patriots of the rising generation. For myself, I must be content with a very small share of the civil and literary fruits of a public school. In the space of two years (1749, 1750), interrupted by danger and debility, I painfully climbed into the third form; and my riper age was left to acquire the beauties of the Latin, and the rudiments of the Greek tongue. Instead of audaciously mingling in the sports, the quarrels, and the connections of our little world, I was still cherished at home under the maternal wing of my aunt; and my removal from Westminster long preceded the approach of manhood.

The violence and variety of my complaints, which had excused my frequent absence from Westminster School, at length engaged Mrs. Porten, with the advice of physicians, to conduct me to Bath: at the end of the Michaelmas vacation (1750) she quitted me with reluctance, and I remained several months under the care of a trusty maid-servant. A strange nervous affection, which alternately contracted my legs, and produced, without any visible symptoms, the most excruciating pain, was ineffectually opposed by the various methods of bathing and pumping. From Bath I was transported to Winchester, to the house of a physician; and after the failure of his medical skill, we had again recourse to the

virtues of the Bath waters. During the intervals of these fits I moved with my father to Buriton and Putney; and a short unsuccessful trial was attempted to renew my attendance at Westminster School. But my infirmities could not be reconciled with the hours and discipline of a public seminary; and instead of a domestic tutor, who might have watched the favorable moments, and gently advanced the progress of my learning, my father was too easily content with such occasional teachers as the different places of my residence could supply. I was never forced, and seldom was I persuaded, to admit these lessons: yet I read with a clergyman at Bath some odes of Horace, and several episodes of Virgil, which gave me an imperfect and transient enjoyment of the Latin poets. It might now be apprehended that I should continue for life an illiterate cripple: but, as I approached my sixteenth year, nature displayed in my favor her mysterious energies: my constitution was fortified and fixed; and my disorders, instead of growing with my growth and strengthening with my strength, most wonderfully vanished. I have never possessed or abused the insolence of health: but since that time few persons have been more exempt from real or imaginary ills; and, till I am admonished by the gout, the reader will no more be troubled with the history of my bodily complaints. My unexpected recovery again encouraged the hope of my education; and I was placed at Esher, in Surrey, in the house of the Reverend Mr. Philip Francis, in a pleasant spot, which promised to unite the various benefits of air, exercise, and study (January 1752). The translator of Horace might have taught me to relish the Latin poets, had not my friends discovered in a few weeks that he preferred the pleasures of London to the instruction of his pupils. My father's perplexity at this time, rather than his prudence, was urged to embrace a singular and desperate measure. Without preparation or delay he carried me to Oxford; and I was matriculated in the university as a gentleman-commoner of Magdalen College before I had accomplished the fifteenth year of my age (April 3, 1752).

The curiosity which had been implanted in my infant mind was still alive and active; but my reason was not sufficiently informed to understand the value, or to lament the loss, of

three precious years from my entrance at Westminster to my admission at Oxford. Instead of repining at my long and frequent confinement to the chamber or the couch, I secretly rejoiced in those infirmities, which delivered me from the exercises of the school and the society of my equals. As often as I was tolerably exempt from danger and pain, reading, free desultory reading, was the employment and comfort of my solitary hours. At Westminster, my aunt sought only to amuse and indulge me; in my stations at Bath and Winchester, at Buriton and Putney, a false compassion respected my sufferings; and I was allowed, without control or advice, to gratify the wanderings of an unripe taste. My indiscriminate appetite subsided by degrees in the *historic* line: and since philosophy has exploded all innate ideas and natural propensities, I must ascribe this choice to the assiduous perusal of the *Universal History,* as the octavo volumes successively appeared. This unequal work, and a treatise of Hearne, the *Ductor Historicus,* referred and introduced me to the Greek and Roman historians, to as many at least as were accessible to an English reader. All that I could find were greedily devoured, from Littlebury's lame Herodotus, and Spelman's valuable Xenophon, to the pompous folios of Gordon's Tacitus, and a ragged Procopius of the beginning of the last century. The cheap acquisition of so much knowledge confirmed my dislike to the study of languages; and I argued with Mrs. Porten, that, were I master of Greek and Latin, I must interpret to myself in English the thoughts of the original, and that such extemporary versions must be inferior to the elaborate translations of professed scholars; a silly sophism, which could not easily be confuted by a person ignorant of any other language than her own. From the ancient I leaped to the modern world: many crude lumps of Speed, Rapin, Mezeray, Davila, Machiavel, Father Paul, Bower, etc., I devoured like so many novels; and I swallowed with the same voracious appetite the descriptions of India and China, of Mexico and Peru.

My first introduction to the historic scenes which have since engaged so many years of my life must be ascribed to an accident. In the summer of 1751 I accompanied my father on a visit to Mr. Hoare's, in Wiltshire; but I was less de-

lighted with the beauties of Stourhead than with discovering in the library a common book, the *Continuation of Echard's Roman History,* which is indeed executed with more skill and taste than the previous work. To me the reigns of the successors of Constantine were absolutely new; and I was immersed in the passage of the Goths over the Danube, when the summons of the dinner-bell reluctantly dragged me from my intellectual feast. This transient glance served rather to irritate than to appease my curiosity; and as soon as I returned to Bath I procured the second and third volumes of Howell's *History of the World,* which exhibit the Byzantine period on a larger scale. Mahomet and his Saracens soon fixed my attention; and some instinct of criticism directed me to the genuine sources. Simon Ockley, an original in every sense, first opened my eyes; and I was led from one book to another, till I had ranged round the circle of Oriental history. Before I was sixteen I had exhausted all that could be learned in English of the Arabs and Persians, the Tartars and Turks; and the same ardor urged me to guess at the French of d'Herbelot, and to construe the barbarous Latin of Pocock's Abulfaragius. Such vague and multifarious reading could not teach me to think, to write, or to act; and the only principle that darted a ray of light into the indigested chaos was an early and rational application to the order of time and place. The maps of Cellarius and Wells imprinted in my mind the picture of ancient geography: from Strauchius I imbibed the elements of chronology: the Tables of Helvicus and Anderson, the Annals of Usher and Prideaux, distinguished the connection of events, and engraved the multitude of names and dates in a clear and indelible series. But in the discussion of the first ages I overleaped the bounds of modesty and use. In my childish balance I presumed to weigh the systems of Scaliger and Petavius, of Marsham and Newton, which I could seldom study in the originals; and my sleep has been disturbed by the difficulty of reconciling the Septuagint with the Hebrew computation. I arrived at Oxford with a stock of erudition that might have puzzled a doctor, and a degree of ignorance of which a schoolboy would have been ashamed.

At the conclusion of this first period of my life I am

tempted to enter a protest against the trite and lavish praise of the happiness of our boyish years, which is echoed with so much affectation in the world. That happiness I have never known, that time I have never regretted; and were my poor aunt still alive, she would bear testimony to the early and constant uniformity of my sentiments. It will indeed be replied that *I* am not a competent judge; that pleasure is incompatible with pain; that joy is excluded from sickness; and that the felicity of a schoolboy consists in the perpetual motion of thoughtless and playful agility, in which I was never qualified to excel. My name, it is most true, could never be enrolled among the sprightly race, the idle progeny of Eton or Westminster,

> "Who foremost might delight to cleave,
> With pliant arm, the glassy wave,
> Or urge the flying ball."

The poet may gayly describe the short hours of recreation; but he forgets the daily tedious labors of the school, which is approached each morning with anxious and reluctant steps.

A traveler who visits Oxford or Cambridge is surprised and edified by the apparent order and tranquillity that prevail in the seats of the English muses. In the most celebrated universities of Holland, Germany, and Italy, the students, who swarm from different countries, are loosely dispersed in private lodgings at the houses of the burghers: they dress according to their fancy and fortune; and in the intemperate quarrels of youth and wine, their *swords,* though less frequently than of old, are sometimes stained with each other's blood. The use of arms is banished from our English universities; the uniform habit of the academics, the square cap and black gown, is adapted to the civil and even clerical profession; and from the doctor in divinity to the undergraduate, the degrees of learning and age are externally distinguished. Instead of being scattered in a town, the students of Oxford and Cambridge are united in colleges; their maintenance is provided at their own expense, or that of the founders; and the stated hours of the hall and chapel represent the discipline of a regular, and, as it were, a religious

community. The eyes of the traveler are attracted by the size or beauty of the public edifices: and the principal colleges appear to be so many palaces, which a liberal nation has erected and endowed for the habitation of science. My own introduction to the university of Oxford forms a new era in my life; and at the distance of forty years I still remember my first emotions of surprise and satisfaction. In my fifteenth year I felt myself suddenly raised from a boy to a man: the persons whom I respected as my superiors in age and academical rank entertained me with every mark of attention and civility; and my vanity was flattered by the velvet cap and silk gown which distinguish a gentleman-commoner from a plebeian student. A decent allowance, more money than a schoolboy had ever seen, was at my own disposal; and I might command, among the tradesmen of Oxford, an indefinite and dangerous latitude of credit. A key was delivered into my hands, which gave me the free use of a numerous and learned library: my apartment consisted of three elegant and well-furnished rooms in the new building, a stately pile, of Magdalen College; and the adjacent walks, had they been frequented by Plato's disciples, might have been compared to the Attic shade on the banks of the Ilissus. Such was the fair prospect of my entrance (April 3, 1752) into the university of Oxford.

To the university of Oxford *I* acknowledge no obligation; and she will as cheerfully renounce me for a son, as I am willing to disclaim her for a mother. I spent fourteen months at Magdalen College; they proved the fourteen months the most idle and unprofitable of my whole life: the reader will pronounce between the school and the scholar, but I cannot affect to believe that nature had disqualified me for all literary pursuits. The specious and ready excuse of my tender age, imperfect preparation, and hasty departure, may doubtless be alleged; nor do I wish to defraud such excuses of their proper weight. Yet in my sixteenth year I was not devoid of capacity or application; even my childish reading had displayed an early though blind propensity for books; and the shallow flood might have been taught to flow in a deep channel and a clear stream. In the discipline of a well-constituted academy, under the guidance of skillful and vigilant

professors, I should gradually have risen from translations to originals, from the Latin to the Greek classics, from dead languages to living science: my hours would have been occupied by useful and agreeable studies, the wanderings of fancy would have been restrained, and I should have escaped the temptations of idleness, which finally precipitated my departure from Oxford.

The college of St. Mary Magdalen was founded in the fifteenth century by Wainfleet, Bishop of Winchester; and now consists of a president, forty fellows, and a number of inferior students. It is esteemed one of the largest and most wealthy of our academical corporations, which may be compared to the Benedictine abbeys of catholic countries; and I have loosely heard that the estates belonging to Magdalen College, which are leased by those indulgent landlords at small quit-rents and occasional fines, might be raised, in the hands of private avarice, to an annual revenue of nearly thirty thousand pounds. Our colleges are supposed to be schools of science, as well as of education; nor is it unreasonable to expect that a body of literary men, devoted to a life of celibacy, exempt from the care of their own subsistence, and amply provided with books, should devote their leisure to the prosecution of study, and that some effects of their studies should be manifested to the world. The shelves of their library groan under the weight of the Benedictine folios, of the editions of the fathers, and the collections of the middle ages, which have issued from the single abbey of St. Germain de Préz at Paris. A composition of genius must be the offspring of one mind; but such works of industry as may be divided among many hands, and must be continued during many years, are the peculiar province of a laborious community.

If I inquire into the manufactures of the monks of Magdalen, if I extend the inquiry to the other colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, a silent blush, or a scornful frown, will be the only reply. The fellows or monks of my time were decent easy men, who supinely enjoyed the gifts of the founder: their days were filled by a series of uniform employments; the chapel and the hall, the coffee-house and the common room, till they retired, weary and well satisfied, to a

long slumber. From the toil of reading, or thinking, or writing, they had absolved their conscience; and the first shoots of learning and ingenuity withered on the ground, without yielding any fruits to the owners or the public. As a gentleman-commoner, I was admitted to the society of the fellows, and fondly expected that some questions of literature would be the amusing and instructive topics of their discourse. Their conversation stagnated in a round of college business, Tory politics, personal anecdotes, and private scandal: their dull and deep potations excused the brisk intemperance of youth: and their constitutional toasts were not expressive of the most lively loyalty for the house of Hanover. A general election was now approaching: the great Oxfordshire contest already blazed with all the malevolence of party zeal. Magdalen College was devoutly attached to the old interest! and the names of Wenman and Dashwood were more frequently pronounced than those of Cicero and Chrysostom. The example of the senior fellows could not inspire the undergraduates with a liberal spirit or studious emulation; and I cannot describe, as I never knew, the discipline of college. Some duties may possibly have been imposed on the poor scholars, whose ambition aspired to the peaceful honors of a fellowship (*ascribi quietis ordinibus . . . Deorum*);[2] but no independent members were admitted below the rank of a gentleman-commoner, and our velvet cap was the cap of liberty. A tradition prevailed that some of our predecessors had spoken Latin declamations in the hall; but of this ancient custom no vestige remained: the obvious methods of public exercises and examinations were totally unknown; and I have never heard that either the president or the society interfered in the private economy of the tutors and their pupils.

The first tutor into whose hands I was resigned appears to have been one of the best of the tribe: Dr. Waldegrave was a learned and pious man, of a mild disposition, strict morals, and abstemious life, who seldom mingled in the politics or the jollity of the college. But his knowledge of the world was confined to the university; his learning was of the last, rather than of the present age; his temper was indolent; his

[2] To be admitted into the dignified assembly of the Gods.—Horace, *Odes*, III. iii. l. 35.

faculties, which were not of the first rate, had been relaxed by the climate, and he was satisfied, like his fellows, with the slight and superficial discharge of an important trust. As soon as my tutor had sounded the insufficiency of his disciple in school-learning, he proposed that we should read every morning, from ten to eleven, the comedies of Terence. The sum of my improvement in the university of Oxford is confined to three or four Latin plays; and even the study of an elegant classic, which might have been illustrated by a comparison of ancient and modern theaters, was reduced to a dry and literal interpretation of the author's text. During the first weeks I constantly attended these lessons in my tutor's room; but as they appeared equally devoid of profit and pleasure, I was once tempted to try the experiment of a formal apology. The apology was accepted with a smile. I repeated the offense with less ceremony; the excuse was admitted with the same indulgence: the slightest motive of laziness or indisposition, the most trifling avocation at home or abroad, was allowed as a worthy impediment; nor did my tutor appear conscious of my absence or neglect. Had the hour of lecture been constantly filled, a single hour was a small portion of my academic leisure. No plan of study was recommended for my use; no exercises were prescribed for his inspection; and, at the most precious season of youth, whole days and weeks were suffered to elapse without labor or amusement, without advice or account. I should have listened to the voice of reason and of my tutor; his mild behavior had gained my confidence. I preferred his society to that of the younger students; and in our evening walks to the top of Heddington Hill we freely conversed on a variety of subjects. Since the days of Pocock and Hyde, Oriental learning has always been the pride of Oxford, and I once expressed an inclination to study Arabic. His prudence discouraged this childish fancy; but he neglected the fair occasion of directing the ardor of a curious mind.

The long recess between the Trinity and Michaelmas terms empties the colleges of Oxford, as well as the courts of Westminster. I spent at my father's house at Buriton in Hampshire the two months of August and September. It is whimsical enough, that as soon as I left Magdalen College my taste

for books began to revive; but it was the same blind and boyish taste for the pursuit of exotic history. Unprovided with original learning, unformed in the habits of thinking, unskilled in the arts of composition, I resolved—to write a book. The title of this first essay, *The Age of Sesostris,* was perhaps suggested by Voltaire's *Age of Louis XIV.,* which was new and popular; but my sole object was to investigate the probable date of the life and reign of the conqueror of Asia. I was then enamored of Sir John Marsham's *Canon Chronicus;* an elaborate work, of whose merits and defects I was not yet qualified to judge. According to his specious though narrow plan, I settled my hero about the time of Solomon, in the tenth century before the Christian era. It was therefore incumbent on me, unless I would adopt Sir Isaac Newton's shorter chronology, to remove a formidable objection; and my solution, for a youth of fifteen, is not devoid of ingenuity. In his version of the Sacred Books, Manetho the high priest has identified Sethosis, or Sesostris, with the elder brother of Danaus, who landed in Greece, according to the Parian Marble, fifteen hundred and ten years before Christ. But in my supposition the high priest is guilty of a voluntary error: flattery is the prolific parent of falsehood. Manetho's history of Egypt is dedicated to Ptolemy Philadelphus, who derived a fabulous or illegitimate pedigree from the Macedonian kings of the race of Hercules. Danaus is the ancestor of Hercules; and after the failure of the elder branch, his descendants, the Ptolemies, are the sole representatives of the royal family, and may claim by inheritance the kingdom which they hold by conquest. Such were my juvenile discoveries; at a riper age I no longer presume to connect the Greek, the Jewish, and the Egyptian antiquities, which are lost in a distant cloud. Nor is this the only instance in which the belief and knowledge of the child are superseded by the more rational ignorance of the man. During my stay at Buriton my infant labor was diligently prosecuted, without much interruption from company or country diversions; and I already heard the music of public applause. The discovery of my own weakness was the first symptom of taste. On my return to Oxford the *Age of Sesostris* was wisely relinquished; but the imperfect sheets remained twenty years at the bottom

of a drawer, till, in a general clearance of papers (November 1772), they were committed to the flames.

After the departure of Dr. Waldegrave I was transferred, with his other pupils, to his academical heir, whose literary character did not command the respect of the college. Dr. —— well remembered that he had a salary to receive, and only forgot that he had a duty to perform. Instead of guiding the studies, and watching over the behavior of his disciple, I was never summoned to attend even the ceremony of a lecture; and, excepting one voluntary visit to his rooms, during the eight months of his titular office the tutor and pupil lived in the same college as strangers to each other. The want of experience, of advice, and of occupation soon betrayed me into some improprieties of conduct, ill-chosen company, late hours, and inconsiderate expense. My growing debts might be secret; but my frequent absence was visible and scandalous: and a tour to Bath, a visit into Buckinghamshire, and four excursions to London in the same winter, were costly and dangerous frolics. They were indeed without a meaning, as without an excuse. The irksomeness of a cloistered life repeatedly tempted me to wander; but my chief pleasure was that of traveling; and I was too young and bashful to enjoy, like a Manly Oxonian in Town, the pleasures of London. In all these excursions I eloped from Oxford; I returned to college; in a few days I eloped again, as if I had been an independent stranger in a hired lodging, without once hearing the voice of admonition, without once feeling the hand of control. Yet my time was lost, my expenses were multiplied, my behavior abroad was unknown; folly as well as vice should have awakened the attention of my superiors, and my tender years would have justified a more than ordinary degree of restraint and discipline. It might be expected an ecclesiastical school should inculcate the orthodox principles of religion. But our venerable mother had contrived to unite the opposite extremes of bigotry and indifference; an heretic, or unbeliever, was a monster in her eyes; but she was always, or often, or sometimes, remiss in the spiritual education of her own children. According to the statutes of the university, every student, before he is matriculated, must subscribe his assent to the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, which

are signed by more than read, and read by more than believe them. My insufficient age excused me, however, from the immediate performance of this legal ceremony; and the vice-chancellor directed me to return as soon as I should have accomplished my fifteenth year; recommending me, in the meanwhile, to the instruction of my college. My college forgot to instruct; I forgot to return, and was myself forgotten by the first magistrate of the university. Without a single lecture, either public or private, either Christian or Protestant, without any academical subscription, without any episcopal confirmation, I was left by the dim light of my catechism to grope my way to the chapel and communion-table, where I was admitted, without a question how far, or by what means, I might be qualified to receive the sacrament. Such almost incredible neglect was productive of the worst mischiefs. From my childhood I had been fond of religious disputation: my poor aunt has been often puzzled by the mysteries which she strove to believe; nor had the elastic spring been totally broken by the weight of the atmosphere of Oxford. The blind activity of idleness urged me to advance without armor into the dangerous mazes of controversy; and, at the age of sixteen, I bewildered myself in the errors of the Church of Rome.

The progress of my conversion may tend to illustrate at least the history of my own mind. It was not long since Dr. Middleton's free inquiry had sounded an alarm in the theological world: much ink and much gall had been spilt in the defense of the primitive miracles; and the two dullest of their champions were crowned with academic honors by the university of Oxford. The name of Middleton was unpopular; and his proscription very naturally led me to peruse his writings, and those of his antagonists. His bold criticism, which approaches the precipice of infidelity, produced on my mind a singular effect; and had I persevered in the communion of Rome, I should now apply to my own fortune the prediction of the Sibyl,

——Via prima salutis,
Quod minimè reris, Graiâ pandetur ab urbe.[3]

[3] "Hope, where unlooked for, comes thy toils to crown
Thy road to safety from a Grecian town."
*Æneid* B. vi. l. 96 (Fairfax Taylor).

The elegance of style and freedom of argument were repelled by a shield of prejudice. I still revered the character, or rather the names, of the saints and fathers whom Dr. Middleton exposes; nor could he destroy my implicit belief that the gift of miraculous powers was continued in the church during the first four or five centuries of Christianity. But I was unable to resist the weight of historical evidence, that within the same period most of the leading doctrines of popery were already introduced in theory and practice: nor was my conclusion absurd, that miracles are the test of truth, and that the church must be orthodox and pure which was so often approved by the visible interposition of the Deity. The marvelous tales which are so boldly attested by the Basils and Chrysostoms, the Austins and Jeromes, compelled me to embrace the superior merits of celibacy, the institution of the monastic life, the use of the sign of the cross, of holy oil, and even of images, the invocation of saints, the worship of relics, the rudiments of purgatory in prayers for the dead, and the tremendous mystery of the sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ, which insensibly swelled into the prodigy of transubstantiation. In these dispositions, and already more than half a convert, I formed an unlucky intimacy with a young gentleman of our college. With a character less resolute, Mr. Molesworth had imbibed the same religious opinions; and some popish books, I know not through what channel, were conveyed into his possession. I read, I applauded, I believed: the English translations of two famous works of Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux, the *Exposition of the Catholic Doctrine,* and the *History of the Protestant Variations,* achieved my conversion, and I surely fell by a noble hand. I have since examined the originals with a more discerning eye, and shall not hesitate to pronounce that Bossuet is indeed a master of all the weapons of controversy. No sooner had I settled my new religion than I resolved to profess myself a Catholic. Youth is sincere and impetuous; and a momentary glow of enthusiasm had raised me above all temporal considerations.

By the keen Protestants, who would gladly retaliate the example of persecution, a clamor is raised of the increase of popery: and they are always loud to declaim against the toleration of priests and Jesuits who pervert so many of his

majesty's subjects from their religion and allegiance. On the present occasion, the fall of one or more of her sons directed this clamor against the university; and it was confidently affirmed that popish missionaries were suffered, under various disguises, to introduce themselves into the colleges of Oxford. But justice obliges me to declare that, as far as relates to myself, this assertion is false; and that I never conversed with a priest, or even with a Papist, till my resolution from books was absolutely fixed. In my last excursion to London I addressed myself to Mr. Lewis, a Roman Catholic bookseller in Russell Street, Covent Garden, who recommended me to a priest, of whose name and order I am at present ignorant. In our first interview he soon discovered that persuasion was needless. After sounding the motives and merits of my conversion, he consented to admit me into the pale of the church; and at his feet on the 8th of June, 1753, I solemnly, though privately, abjured the errors of heresy. The seduction of an English youth of family and fortune was an act of as much danger as glory; but he bravely overlooked the danger, of which I was not then sufficiently informed. "Where a person is reconciled to the see of Rome, or procures others to be reconciled, the offense (says Blackstone) amounts to high treason." And if the humanity of the age would prevent the execution of this sanguinary statute, there were other laws of a less odious cast, which condemned the priest to perpetual imprisonment, and transferred the proselyte's estate to his nearest relation. An elaborate controversial epistle, approved by my director, and addressed to my father, announced and justified the step which I had taken. My father was neither a bigot nor a philosopher; but his affection deplored the loss of an only son; and his good sense was astonished at my strange departure from the religion of my country. In the first sally of passion he divulged a secret which prudence might have suppressed, and the gates of Magdalen College were forever shut against my return. Many years afterwards, when the name of Gibbon was become as notorious as that of Middleton, it was industriously whispered at Oxford that the historian had formerly "turned Papist;" my character stood exposed to the reproach of inconstancy; and this invidious topic would have been

handled without mercy by my opponents, could they have separated my cause from that of the university. For my own part, I am proud of an honest sacrifice of interest to conscience.

The academical resentment which I may possibly have provoked will prudently spare this plain narrative of my studies, or rather of my idleness; and of the unfortunate event which shortened the term of my residence at Oxford. But it may be suggested that my father was unlucky in the choice of a society, and the chance of a tutor. It will perhaps be asserted, that in the lapse of forty years many improvements have taken place in the college and in the university. Under the auspices of the late deans, a more regular discipline has been introduced, as I am told, at Christ Church; a course of classical and philosophical studies is proposed, and even pursued, in that numerous seminary: learning has been made a duty, a pleasure, and even a fashion; and several young gentlemen do honor to the college in which they have been educated.

After carrying me to Putney, to the house of his friend Mr. Mallet, by whose philosophy I was rather scandalized than reclaimed, it was necessary for my father to form a new plan of education, and to devise some method which, if possible, might effect the cure of my spiritual malady. After much debate it was determined, from the advice and personal experience of Mr. Eliot (now Lord Eliot), to fix me, during some years, at Lausanne in Switzerland. Mr. Frey, a Swiss gentleman of Basil, undertook the conduct of the journey: we left London the 19th of June, crossed the sea from Dover to Calais, traveled post through several provinces of France, by the direct road of St. Quentin, Rheims, Langres, and Besançon, and arrived the 30th of June at Lausanne, where I was immediately settled under the roof and tuition of Mr. Pavilliard, a Calvinist minister.

The first marks of my father's displeasure rather astonished than afflicted me: when he threatened to banish, and disown, and disinherit a rebellious son, I cherished a secret hope that he would not be able or willing to effect his menaces; and the pride of conscience encouraged me to sustain the honorable and important part which I was now acting.

My spirits were raised and kept alive by the rapid motion of my journey, the new and various scenes of the Continent, and the civility of Mr. Frey, a man of sense, who was not ignorant of books or the world. But after he had resigned me into Pavilliard's hands, and I was fixed in my new habitation, I had leisure to contemplate the strange and melancholy prospect before me. My first complaint arose from my ignorance of the language. In my childhood I had once studied the French grammar, and I could imperfectly understand the easy prose of a familiar subject. But when I was thus suddenly cast on a foreign land, I found myself deprived of the use of speech and of hearing; and, during some weeks, incapable not only of enjoying the pleasures of conversation, but even of asking or answering a question in the common intercourse of life. To a home-bred Englishman every object, every custom was offensive; but the native of any country might have been disgusted with the general aspect of his lodging and entertainment. I had now exchanged my elegant apartment in Magdalen College, for a narrow, gloomy street, the most unfrequented of an unhandsome town, for an old inconvenient house, and for a small chamber ill contrived and ill furnished, which on the approach of winter, instead of a companionable fire, must be warmed by the dull invisible heat of a stove. From a man I was again degraded to the dependence of a schoolboy. Mr. Pavilliard managed my expenses, which had been reduced to a diminutive state: I received a small monthly allowance for my pocket-money; and, helpless and awkward as I have ever been, I no longer enjoyed the indispensable comfort of a servant. My condition seemed as destitute of hope as it was devoid of pleasure: I was separated for an indefinite, which appeared an infinite term, from my native country; and I had lost all connection with my Catholic friends. I have since reflected with surprise, that, as the Romish clergy of every part of Europe maintain a close correspondence with each other, they never attempted, by letters or messages, to rescue me from the hands of the heretics, or at least to confirm my zeal and constancy in the profession of the faith. Such was my first introduction to Lausanne; a place where I spent nearly five years with pleasure and profit, which I afterwards revisited without

compulsion, and which I have finally selected as the most grateful retreat for the decline of my life.

But it is the peculiar felicity of youth that the most unpleasing objects and events seldom make a deep or lasting impression; it forgets the past, enjoys the present, and anticipates the future. At the flexible age of sixteen I soon learned to endure, and gradually to adopt, the new forms of arbitrary manners: the real hardships of my situation were alienated by time. Had I been sent abroad in a more splendid style, such as the fortune and bounty of my father might have supplied, I might have returned home with the same stock of language and science which our countrymen usually import from the Continent. An exile and a prisoner as I was, their example betrayed me into some irregularities of wine, of play, and of idle excursions: but I soon felt the impossibility of associating with them on equal terms; and after the departure of my first acquaintance, I held a cold and civil correspondence with their successors. This seclusion from English society was attended with the most solid benefits. In the Pays de Vaud the French language is used with less imperfection than in most of the distant provinces of France: in Pavilliard's family necessity compelled me to listen and to speak; and if I was at first disheartened by the apparent slowness, in a few months I was astonished by the rapidity of my progress. My pronunciation was formed by the constant repetition of the same sounds; the variety of words and idioms, the rules of grammar, and distinctions of genders, were impressed in my memory: ease and freedom were obtained by practice; correctness and elegance by labor; and before I was recalled home, French, in which I spontaneously thought, was more familiar than English to my ear, my tongue, and my pen. The first effect of this opening knowledge was the revival of my love of reading, which had been chilled at Oxford; and I soon turned over, without much choice, almost all the French books in my tutor's library. Even these amusements were productive of real advantage: my taste and judgment were now somewhat riper. I was introduced to a new mode of style and literature; by the comparison of manners and opinions, my views were enlarged, my prejudices were corrected, and a copious voluntary ab-

stract of the *Histoire de l'Eglise et de l'Empire*, by le Sueur, may be placed in a middle line between my childish and my manly studies. As soon as I was able to converse with the natives, I began to feel some satisfaction in their company: my awkward timidity was polished and emboldened; and I frequented for the first time assemblies of men and women. The acquaintance of the Pavilliards prepared me by degrees for more elegant society. I was received with kindness and indulgence in the best families of Lausanne; and it was in one of these that I formed an intimate and lasting connection with Mr. Deyverdun, a young man of an amiable temper and excellent understanding. In the arts of fencing and dancing, small indeed was my proficiency; and some months were idly wasted in the riding-school. My unfitness to bodily exercise reconciled me to a sedentary life, and the horse, the favorite of my countrymen, never contributed to the pleasures of my youth.

My obligations to the lessons of Mr. Pavilliard gratitude will not suffer me to forget: he was endowed with a clear head and a warm heart; his innate benevolence had assuaged the spirit of the church; he was rational, because he was moderate: in the course of his studies he had acquired a just though superficial knowledge of most branches of literature; by long practice he was skilled in the arts of teaching; and he labored with assiduous patience to know the character, gain the affection, and open the mind of his English pupil. As soon as we began to understand each other, he gently led me, from a blind and undistinguishing love of reading, into the path of instruction. I consented with pleasure that a portion of the morning hours should be consecrated to a plan of modern history and geography, and to the critical perusal of the French and Latin classics: and at each step I felt myself invigorated by the habits of application and method. His prudence repressed and dissembled some youthful sallies; and as soon as I was confirmed in the habits of industry and temperance, he gave the reins into my own hands. His favorable report of my behavior and progress gradually obtained some latitude of action and expense; and he wished to alleviate the hardships of my lodging and entertainment. The principles of philosophy were associated with the examples

of taste; and by a singular chance, the book, as well as the man, which contributed the most effectually to my education, has a stronger claim on my gratitude than on my admiration. Mr. De Crousaz, the adversary of Bayle and Pope, is not distinguished by lively fancy or profound reflection; and even in his own country, at the end of a few years, his name and writings are almost obliterated. But his philosophy had been formed in the school of Locke, his divinity in that of Limborch and Le Clerc; in a long and laborious life, several generations of pupils were taught to think, and even to write; his lessons rescued the academy of Lausanne from Calvinistic prejudice; and he had the rare merit of diffusing a more liberal spirit among the clergy and people of the Pays de Vaud.

His system of logic, which in the last editions has swelled to six tedious and prolix volumes, may be praised as a clear and methodical abridgment of the art of reasoning, from our simple ideas to the most complex operations of the human understanding. This system I studied, and meditated, and abstracted, till I obtained the free command of a universal instrument, which I soon presumed to exercise on my catholic opinions. Pavilliard was not unmindful that his first task, his most important duty, was to reclaim me from the errors of popery. The intermixture of sects has rendered the Swiss clergy acute and learned on the topics of controversy; and I have some of his letters in which he celebrates the dexterity of his attack, and my gradual concessions, after a firm and well-managed defense. I was willing, and I am now willing, to allow him a handsome share of the honor of my conversion: yet I must observe that it was principally effected by my private reflections; and I still remember my solitary transport at the discovery of a philosophical argument against the doctrine of transubstantiation: *that* the text of scripture, which seems to inculcate the real presence, is attested only by a single sense—our sight; while the real presence itself is disproved by three of our senses—the sight, the touch, and the taste. The various articles of the Romish creed disappeared like a dream; and after a full conviction, on Christmas Day 1754, I received the sacrament in the church of Lausanne. It was here that I suspended my religious inquiries, acquiescing with implicit belief in

the tenets and mysteries which are adopted by the general consent of Catholics and Protestants.

Such, from my arrival at Lausanne, during the first eighteen or twenty months (July 1753—March 1755), were my useful studies, the foundation of all my future improvements. But every man who rises above the common level has received two educations: the first from his teachers; the second, more personal and important, from himself. He will not, like the fanatics of the last age, define the moment of grace; but he cannot forget the era of his life in which his mind has expanded to its proper form and dimensions. My worthy tutor had the good sense and modesty to discern how far he could be useful: as soon as he felt that I had advanced beyond his speed and measure, he wisely left me to my genius; and the hours of lesson were soon lost in the voluntary labor of the whole morning, and sometimes of the whole day. The desire of prolonging my time gradually confirmed the salutary habit of early rising, to which I have always adhered, with some regard to seasons and situations: but it is happy for my eyes and my health that my temperate ardor has never been seduced to trespass on the hours of the night. During the last three years of my residence at Lausanne I may assume the merit of serious and solid application; but I am tempted to distinguish the last eight months of the year 1755 as the period of the most extraordinary diligence and rapid progress. In my French and Latin translations I adopted an excellent method, which, from my own success, I would recommend to the imitation of students. I chose some classic writer, such as Cicero and Vertot, the most approved for purity and elegance of style. I translated, for instance, an epistle of Cicero into French; and, after throwing it aside till the words and phrases were obliterated from my memory, I retranslated my French into such Latin as I could find; and then compared each sentence of my imperfect version with the ease, the grace, the propriety of the Roman orator. A similar experiment was made on several pages of the Revolutions of Vertot; I turned them into Latin, returned them after a sufficient interval into my own French, and again scrutinized the resemblance or dissimilitude of the copy and

the original. By degrees I was less ashamed, by degrees I was more satisfied with myself; and I persevered in the practice of these double translations, which filled several books, till I had acquired the knowledge of both idioms, and the command at least of a correct style. This useful exercise of writing was accompanied and succeeded by the more pleasing occupation of reading the best authors. The perusal of the Roman classics was at once my exercise and reward.

Dr. Middleton's History, which I then appreciated above its true value, naturally directed me to the writings of Cicero. I tasted the beauties of language, I breathed the spirit of freedom, and I imbibed from his precepts and examples the public and private sense of a man. Cicero in Latin, and Xenophon in Greek, are indeed the two ancients whom I would first propose to a liberal scholar; not only for the merit of their style and sentiments, but for the admirable lessons, which may be applied almost to every situation of public and private life. Cicero's *Epistles* may in particular afford the models of every form of correspondence, from the careless effusions of tenderness and friendship, to the well-guarded declaration of discreet and dignified resentment. After finishing this great author, a library of eloquence and reason, I formed a more extensive plan of reviewing the Latin classics, under the four divisions of, 1, historians; 2, poets; 3, orators; and 4, philosophers, in a chronological series, from the days of Plautus and Sallust to the decline of the language and empire of Rome: and this plan, in the last twenty-seven months of my residence at Lausanne (January 1756—April 1758), I *nearly* accomplished. Nor was this review, however rapid, either hasty or superficial. I indulged myself in a second and even a third perusal of Terence, Virgil, Horace, Tacitus, etc., and studied to imbibe the sense and spirit most congenial to my own. Mr. Deyverdun, my friend, whose name will be frequently repeated, had joined with equal zeal, though not with equal perseverance, in the same undertaking. To him every thought, every composition, was instantly communicated; with him I enjoyed the benefits of a free conversation on the topics of our common studies.

But it is scarcely possible for a mind endowed with any active curiosity to be long conversant with the Latin classics without aspiring to know the Greek originals, whom they celebrate as their masters, and of whom they so warmly recommend the study and imitation;

——Vos exemplaria Græca
Nocturnâ versate manu, versate diurnâ.[4]

It was now that I regretted the early years which had been wasted in sickness or idleness, or mere idle reading; that I condemned the perverse method of our schoolmasters, who, by first teaching the mother language, might descend with so much ease and perspicuity to the origin and etymology of a derivative idiom. In the nineteenth year of my age I determined to supply this defect; and the lessons of Pavilliard again contributed to smooth the entrance of the way, the Greek alphabet, the grammar, and the pronunciation according to the French accent. At my earnest request we presumed to open the *Iliad;* and I had the pleasure of beholding, though darkly and through a glass, the true image of Homer, whom I had long since admired in an English dress. After my tutor had left me to myself, I worked my way through about half the *Iliad,* and afterwards interpreted alone a large portion of Xenophon and Herodotus. But my ardor, destitute of aid and emulation, was gradually cooled, and, from the barren task of searching words in a lexicon, I withdrew to the free and familiar conversation of Virgil and Tacitus. Yet in my residence at Lausanne I had laid a solid foundation, which enabled me, in a more propitious season, to prosecute farther the study of Grecian literature.

From a blind idea of the usefulness of such abstract science, my father had been desirous, and even pressing, that I should devote some time to the mathematics; nor could I refuse to comply with so reasonable a wish. During two winters I attended the private lectures of Monsieur de Traytorrens, who explained the elements of algebra and geometry, as far as the conic sections of the Marquis de l'Hôpital, and ap-

[4] Study your examples of Greek literature alike by night and by day.—Horace, *De Arte Poetica,* l. 268.

peared satisfied with my diligence and improvement. But as my childish propensity for numbers and calculations was totally extinct, I was content to receive the passive impression of my professor's lectures, without any active exercise of my own powers. As soon as I understood the principles I relinquished forever the pursuit of the mathematics; nor can I lament that I desisted before my mind was hardened by the habit of rigid demonstration, so destructive of the finer feelings of moral evidence, which must, however, determine the actions and opinions of our lives. I listened with more pleasure to the proposal of studying the law of nature and nations, which was taught in the academy of Lausanne by Mr. Vicat, a professor of some learning and reputation. But, instead of attending his public or private course, I preferred in my closet the lessons of his masters, and my own reason. Without being disgusted by Grotius or Puffendorf, I studied in their writings the duties of a man, the rights of a citizen, the theory of justice (it is, alas! a theory), and the laws of peace and war, which have had some influence on the practice of modern Europe. My fatigues were alleviated by the good sense of their commentator Barbeyrac. Locke's *Treatise of Government* instructed me in the knowledge of Whig principles, which are rather founded in reason than experience; but my delight was in the frequent perusal of Montesquieu, whose energy of style, and boldness of hypothesis, were powerful to awaken and stimulate the genius of the age.

The logic of De Crousaz had prepared me to engage with his master Locke, and his antagonist Bayle; of whom the former may be used as a bridle, and the latter as a spur, to the curiosity of a young philosopher. According to the nature of their respective works, the schools of argument and objection, I carefully went through the *Essay on Human Understanding,* and occasionally consulted the most interesting articles of the *Philosophic Dictionary.* In the infancy of my reason I turned over, as an idle amusement, the most serious and important treatise: in its maturity the most trifling performance could exercise my taste or judgment; and more than once I have been led by a novel into a deep and instructive train of thinking. But I cannot forbear

to mention three particular books, since they may have remotely contributed to form the historian of the Roman empire. 1. From the *Provincial Letters of Pascal,* which almost every year I have perused with new pleasure, I learned to manage the weapon of grave and temperate irony, even on subjects of ecclesiastical solemnity. 2. *The Life of Julian,* by the Abbé de la Bleterie, first introduced me to the man and the times; and I should be glad to recover my first essay on the truth of the miracle which stopped the rebuilding of the Temple of Jerusalem. 3. In Giannone's *Civil History of Naples* I observed with a critical eye the progress and abuse of sacerdotal power, and the revolutions of Italy in the darker ages. This various reading, which I now conducted with discretion, was digested, according to the precept and model of Mr. Locke, into a large commonplace-book; a practice, however, which I do not strenuously recommend. The action of the pen will doubtless imprint an idea on the mind as well as on the paper; but I much question whether the benefits of this laborious method are adequate to the waste of time; and I must agree with Dr. Johnson (*Idler,* No. 74), "that what is twice read is commonly better remembered than what is transcribed."

During two years, if I forget some boyish excursions of a day or a week, I was fixed at Lausanne; but at the end of the third summer my father consented that I should make the tour of Switzerland with Pavilliard: and our short absence of one month (September 21—October 20, 1755) was a reward and relaxation of my assiduous studies.

My thirst of improvement, and the languid state of science at Lausanne, soon prompted me to solicit a literary correspondence with several men of learning, whom I had not an opportunity of personally consulting. 1. In the perusal of Livy (xxx. 44) I had been stopped by a sentence in a speech of Hannibal, which cannot be reconciled by any torture with his character or argument. The commentators dissemble or confess their perplexity. It occurred to me that the change of a single letter, by substituting *otio* instead of *odio,* might restore a clear and consistent sense; but I wished to weigh my emendation in scales less partial than my own. I addressed myself to M. Crevier, the successor of Rollin, and

a professor in the University of Paris, who had published a large and valuable edition of Livy. His answer was speedy and polite; he praised my ingenuity, and adopted my conjecture. 2. I maintained a Latin correspondence, at first anonymous, and afterwards in my own name, with Professor Breitinger of Zurich, the learned editor of a Septuagint Bible. In our frequent letters we discussed many questions of antiquity, many passages of the Latin classics. I proposed my interpretations and amendments. His censures, for he did not spare my boldness of conjecture, were sharp and strong; and I was encouraged by the consciousness of my strength, when I could stand in free debate against a critic of such eminence and erudition. 3. I corresponded on similar topics with the celebrated Professor Matthew Gesner, of the University of Gottingen; and he accepted as courteously as the two former the invitation of an unknown youth. But his abilities might possibly be decayed; his elaborate letters were feeble and prolix; and when I asked his proper direction, the vain old man covered half a sheet of paper with the foolish enumeration of his titles and offices. 4. These professors of Paris, Zurich, and Gottingen were strangers whom I presumed to address on the credit of their name; but Mr. Allamand, minister at Bex, was my personal friend, with whom I maintained a more free and interesting correspondence. He was a master of language, of science, and, above all, of dispute; and his acute and flexible logic could support, with equal address, and perhaps with equal indifference, the adverse sides of every possible question. By fencing with so skillful a master I acquired some dexterity in the use of my philosophic weapons; but I was still the slave of education and prejudice. He had some measures to keep; and I much suspect that he never showed me the true colors of his secret skepticism.

Before I was recalled from Switzerland I had the satisfaction of seeing the most extraordinary man of the age, a poet, an historian, a philosopher, who has filled thirty quartos, of prose and verse, with his various productions, often excellent, and always entertaining. Need I add the name of Voltaire? After forfeiting, by his own misconduct, the friendship of the first of kings, he retired, at the age of sixty,

with a plentiful fortune, to a free and beautiful country, and resided two winters (1757 and 1758) in the town or neighborhood of Lausanne. My desire of beholding Voltaire, whom I then rated above his real magnitude, was easily gratified. He received me with civility as an English youth; but I cannot boast of any peculiar notice or distinction, *Virgilium vidi tantum.*[5]

The ode which he composed on his first arrival on the banks of the Leman Lake, *O Maison d'Aristippe! O Jardin d'Epicure,*[6] etc., had been imparted as a secret to the gentleman by whom I was introduced. He allowed me to read it twice; I knew it by heart; and, as my discretion was not equal to my memory, the author was soon displeased by the circulation of a copy. In writing this trivial anecdote, I wished to observe whether my memory was impaired, and I have the comfort of finding that every line of the poem is still engraved in fresh and indelible characters. The highest gratification which I derived from Voltaire's residence at Lausanne was the uncommon circumstance of hearing a great poet declaim his own productions on the stage. He had formed a company of gentlemen and ladies, some of whom were not destitute of talents. A decent theater was framed at Monrepos, a country-house at the end of a suburb; dresses and scenes were provided at the expense of the actors; and the author directed the rehearsals with the zeal and attention of paternal love. In two successive winters his tragedies of *Zayre, Alzire, Zulime,* and his sentimental comedy of the *Enfant Prodigue,* were played at the theater of Monrepos. Voltaire represented the characters best adapted to his years, Lusignan, Alvaréz, Benassar, Euphemon. His declamation was fashioned to the pomp and cadence of the old stage; and he expressed the enthusiasm of poetry rather than the feelings of nature. My ardor, which soon became conspicuous, seldom failed of procuring me a ticket. The habits of pleasure fortified my taste for the French theater, and that taste has perhaps abated my idolatry for the gigantic genius

[5] I saw Virgil only.—Ovid, *Tristia,* IV. x. 51.

[6] "O House of Aristippus,
O Garden of Epicurus."
*Œuvres de Voltaire,* vol. xi. 174.

of Shakspeare, which is inculcated from our infancy as the first duty of an Englishman. The wit and philosophy of Voltaire, his table and theater, refined, in a visible degree, the manners of Lausanne; and, however addicted to study, I enjoyed my share of the amusements of society. After the representation of Monrepos I sometimes supped with the actors. I was now familiar in some, and acquainted in many, houses; and my evenings were generally devoted to cards and conversation, either in private parties or numerous assemblies.

I hesitate, from the apprehension of ridicule, when I approach the delicate subject of my early love. By this word I do not mean the polite attention, the gallantry, without hope or design, which has originated in the spirit of chivalry, and is interwoven with the texture of French manners. I understand by this passion the union of desire, friendship, and tenderness, which is inflamed by a single female, which prefers her to the rest of her sex, and which seeks her possession as the supreme or the sole happiness of our being. I need not blush at recollecting the object of my choice; and though my love was disappointed of success, I am rather proud that I was once capable of feeling such a pure and exalted sentiment. The personal attractions of Mademoiselle Susan Curchod were embellished by the virtues and talents of the mind. Her fortune was humble, but her family was respectable. Her mother, a native of France, had preferred her religion to her country. The profession of her father did not extinguish the moderation and philosophy of his temper, and he lived content with a small salary and laborious duty in the obscure lot of minister of Crassy, in the mountains that separate the Pays de Vaud from the county of Burgundy. In the solitude of a sequestered village he bestowed a liberal, and even learned, education on his only daughter. She surpassed his hopes by her proficiency in the sciences and languages; and in her short visits to some relations at Lausanne, the wit, the beauty, and erudition of Mademoiselle Curchod were the theme of universal applause. The report of such a prodigy awakened my curiosity; I saw and loved. I found her learned without pedantry, lively in conversation, pure in sentiment, and elegant in manners;

and the first sudden emotion was fortified by the habits and knowledge of a more familiar acquaintance. She permitted me to make her two or three visits at her father's house. I passed some happy days there, in the mountains of Burgundy, and her parents honorably encouraged the connection. In a calm retirement the gay vanity of youth no longer fluttered in her bosom; she listened to the voice of truth and passion, and I might presume to hope that I had made some impression on a virtuous heart. At Crassy and Lausanne I indulged my dream of felicity: but on my return to England, I soon discovered that my father would not hear of this strange alliance, and that, without his consent, I was myself destitute and helpless. After a painful struggle I yielded to my fate; I sighed as a lover, I obeyed as a son; my wound was insensibly healed by time, absence, and the habits of a new life.

My cure was accelerated by a faithful report of the tranquillity and cheerfulness of the lady herself, and my love subsided in friendship and esteem. The minister of Crassy soon afterwards died; his stipend died with him: his daughter retired to Geneva, where, by teaching young ladies, she earned a hard subsistence for herself and her mother; but in her lowest distress she maintained a spotless reputation and a dignified behavior. A rich banker of Paris, a citizen of Geneva, had the good fortune and good sense to discover and possess this inestimable treasure; and in the capital of taste and luxury she resisted the temptations of wealth, as she had sustained the hardships of indigence. The genius of her husband has exalted him to the most conspicuous station in Europe. In every change of prosperity and disgrace he has reclined on the bosom of a faithful friend; and Mademoiselle Curchod is now the wife of M. Necker, the minister, and perhaps the legislator, of the French monarchy.

Whatsoever have been the fruits of my education, they must be ascribed to the fortunate banishment which placed me at Lausanne. I have sometimes applied to my own fate the verses of Pindar, which remind an Olympic champion that his victory was the consequence of his exile; and that at home, like a domestic fowl, his days might have rolled away inactive or inglorious.

. . . ἤτοι καὶ τεά κε᾽,
᾽Ενδομάχας ἄτ᾽ ἀλέκτωρ,
Συγγόνῳ παρ᾽ ἑστίᾳ
᾽Ακλεὴς τιμὰ κατεφυλλορόησεν ποδῶν·
Εἰ μὴ στᾶσις ἀντιάνειρα
Κνωσίας σ᾽ἄμερσε πάτρας.[7] *Olymp.* xii.

If my childish revolt against the religion of my country had not stripped me in time of my academic gown, the five important years, so liberally improved in the studies and conversation of Lausanne, would have been steeped in port and prejudice among the monks of Oxford. Had the fatigue of idleness compelled me to read, the path of learning would not have been enlightened by a ray of philosophic freedom. I should have grown to manhood ignorant of the life and language of Europe, and my knowledge of the world would have been confined to an English cloister. But my religious error fixed me at Lausanne, in a state of banishment and disgrace. The rigid course of discipline and abstinence to which I was condemned invigorated the constitution of my mind and body; poverty and pride estranged me from my countrymen. One mischief, however, and in their eyes a serious and irreparable mischief, was derived from the success of my Swiss education: I had ceased to be an Englishman. At the flexible period of youth, from the age of sixteen to twenty-one, my opinions, habits, and sentiments were cast in a foreign mold; the faint and distant remembrance of England was almost obliterated; my native language was grown less familiar; and I should have cheerfully accepted the offer of a moderate independence on the terms of perpetual exile. By the good sense and temper of Pavilliard my yoke was insensibly lightened: he left me master of my time and actions; but he could neither change my situation nor increase my allowance, and with the progress

[7] Thus, like the crested bird of Mars, at home
Engaged in foul domestic jars,
And wasted with intestine wars,
Inglorious hadst thou spent thy vig'rous bloom;
Had not sedition's civil broils
Expell'd thee from thy native *Crete*,
And driv'n thee with more glorious toils
Th' *Olympic* crown in *Pisa's* plain to meet.
WEST'S *Pind.*

of my years and reason I impatiently sighed for the moment of my deliverance. At length, in the spring of the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-eight, my father signified his permission and his pleasure that I should immediately return home. We were then in the midst of a war: the resentment of the French at our taking their ships without a declaration had rendered that polite nation somewhat peevish and difficult. They denied a passage to English travelers, and the road through Germany was circuitous, toilsome, and perhaps, in the neighborhood of the armies, exposed to some danger. In this perplexity, two Swiss officers of my acquaintance in the Dutch service, who were returning to their garrisons, offered to conduct me through France as one of their companions; nor did we sufficiently reflect that my borrowed name and regimentals might have been considered, in case of a discovery, in a very serious light. I took my leave of Lausanne on the 11th of April 1758, with a mixture of joy and regret, in the firm resolution of revisiting, as a man, the persons and places which had been so dear to my youth. We traveled slowly, but pleasantly, in a hired coach, over the hills of Franche-compté and the fertile province of Lorraine, and passed, without accident or inquiry, through several fortified towns of the French frontier: from thence we entered the wild Ardennes of the Austrian duchy of Luxemburg; and after crossing the Meuse at Liége, we traversed the heaths of Brabant, and reached, on the fifteenth day, our Dutch garrison of Bois le Duc. In our passage through Nancy my eye was gratified by the aspect of a regular and beautiful city, the work of Stanislaus, who, after the storms of Polish royalty, reposed in the love and gratitude of his new subjects of Lorraine. In our halt at Maestricht I visited Mr. De Beaufort, a learned critic, who was known to me by his specious arguments against the five first centuries of the Roman History. After dropping my regimental companions I stepped aside to visit Rotterdam and the Hague. I wished to have observed a country, the monument of freedom and industry; but my days were numbered, and a longer delay would have been ungraceful. I hastened to embark at the Brill, landed the next day at Harwich, and proceeded to London, where my father awaited

my arrival. The whole term of my first absence from England was four years, ten months, and fifteen days.

In the prayers of the church our personal concerns are judiciously reduced to the threefold distinction of *mind, body,* and *estate.* The sentiments of the mind excite and exercise our social sympathy. The review of my moral and literary character is the most interesting to myself and to the public; and I may expatiate, without reproach, on my private studies, since they have produced the public writings which can alone entitle me to the esteem and friendship of my readers. The experience of the world inculcates a discreet reserve on the subject of our person and estate, and we soon learn that a free disclosure of our riches or poverty would provoke the malice of envy, or encourage the insolence of contempt.

The only person in England whom I was impatient to see was my aunt Porten, the affectionate guardian of my tender years. I hastened to her house in College Street, Westminster; and the evening was spent in the effusions of joy and confidence. It was not without some awe and apprehension that I approached the presence of my father. My infancy, to speak the truth, had been neglected at home; the severity of his look and language at our last parting still dwelt on my memory; nor could I form any notion of his character, or my probable reception. They were both more agreeable than I could expect. The domestic discipline of our ancestors has been relaxed by the philosophy and softness of the age; and if my father remembered that he had trembled before a stern parent, it was only to adopt with his own son an opposite mode of behavior. He received me as a man and a friend; all constraint was banished at our first interview, and we ever afterwards continued on the same terms of easy and equal politeness. He applauded the success of my education; every word and action was expressive of the most cordial affection; and our lives would have passed without a cloud, if his economy had been equal to his fortune, or if his fortune had been equal to his desires. During my absence he had married his second wife, Miss Dorothea Patton, who was introduced to me with the most unfavorable prejudice. I considered his second marriage as an act of

displeasure, and I was disposed to hate the rival of my mother. But the injustice was in my own fancy, and the imaginary monster was an amiable and deserving woman. I could not be mistaken in the first view of her understanding, her knowledge, and the elegant spirit of her conversation: her polite welcome, and her assiduous care to study and gratify my wishes, announced at least that the surface would be smooth; and my suspicions of art and falsehood were gradually dispelled by the full discovery of her warm and exquisite sensibility.

After some reserve on my side, our minds associated in confidence and friendship; and as Mrs. Gibbon had neither children nor the hopes of children, we more easily adopted the tender names and genuine characters of mother and of son. By the indulgence of these parents, I was left at liberty to consult my taste or reason in the choice of place, of company, and of amusements; and my excursions were bounded only by the limits of the island and the measure of my income. Some faint efforts were made to procure me the employment of secretary to a foreign embassy; and I listened to a scheme which would again have transported me to the Continent. Mrs. Gibbon, with seeming wisdom, exhorted me to take chambers in the Temple, and devote my leisure to the study of the law. I cannot repent of having neglected her advice. Few men, without the spur of necessity, have resolution to force their way through the thorns and thickets of that gloomy labyrinth. Nature had not endowed me with the bold and ready eloquence which makes itself heard amidst the tumult of the bar; and I should probably have been diverted from the labors of literature, without acquiring the fame or fortune of a successful pleader. I had no need to call to my aid the regular duties of a profession; every day, every hour, was agreeably filled; nor have I known, like so many of my countrymen, the tediousness of an idle life.

Of the two years (May 1758—May 1760) between my return to England and the embodying of the Hampshire militia, I passed about nine months in London, and the remainder in the country. The metropolis affords many amusements, which are open to all. It is itself an astonishing and perpetual spectacle to the curious eye; and each

taste, each sense may be gratified by the variety of objects which will occur in the long circuit of a morning walk. I assiduously frequented the theaters at a very propitious era of the stage, when a constellation of excellent actors, both in tragedy and comedy, was eclipsed by the meridian brightness of Garrick in the maturity of his judgment and vigor of his performance. The pleasures of a town-life are within the reach of every man who is regardless of his health, his money, and his company. By the contagion of example I was sometimes seduced; but the better habits which I had formed at Lausanne induced me to seek a more elegant and rational society; and if my search was less easy and successful than I might have hoped, I shall at present impute the failure to the disadvantages of my situation and character.

My father's residence in Hampshire, where I have passed many light, and some heavy hours, was at Buriton, near Petersfield, one mile from the Portsmouth road, and at the easy distance of fifty-eight miles from London. An old mansion, in a state of decay, had been converted into the fashion and convenience of a modern house; and if strangers had nothing to see, the inhabitants had little to desire. The spot was not happily chosen, at the end of the village and the bottom of the hill: but the aspect of the adjacent grounds was various and cheerful; the downs commanded a noble prospect, and the long hanging woods in sight of the house could not perhaps have been improved by art or expense. My father kept in his own hands the whole of the estate, and even rented some additional land; and whatsoever might be the balance of profit and loss, the farm supplied him with amusement and plenty. The produce maintained a number of men and horses, which were multiplied by the intermixture of domestic and rural servants; and in the intervals of labor the favorite team, a handsome set of bays or grays, was harnessed to the coach. The economy of the house was regulated by the taste and prudence of Mrs. Gibbon. She prided herself in the elegance of her occasional dinners; and from the uncleanly avarice of Madame Pavilliard, I was suddenly transported to the daily neatness and luxury of an English table. Our immediate neighborhood was rare and rustic; but from the verge of our hills, as far as Chichester

and Goodwood, the western district of Sussex was interspersed with noble seats and hospitable families, with whom we cultivated a friendly, and might have enjoyed a very frequent, intercourse. As my stay at Buriton was always voluntary, I was received and dismissed with smiles; but the comforts of my retirement did not depend on the ordinary pleasures of the country. My father could never inspire me with his love and knowledge of farming. I never handled a gun, I seldom mounted a horse; and my philosophic walks were soon terminated by a shady bench, where I was long detained by the sedentary amusement of reading or meditation. At home I occupied a pleasant and spacious apartment; the library on the same floor was soon considered as my peculiar domain; and I might say with truth that I was never less alone than when by myself.

If in a more domestic or more dissipated scene my application was somewhat relaxed, the love of knowledge was inflamed and gratified by the command of books; and I compared the poverty of Lausanne with the plenty of London. My father's study at Buriton was stuffed with much trash of the last age, with much high church divinity and politics, which have long since gone to their proper place: yet it contained some valuable editions of the classics and the fathers, the choice, as it should seem, of Mr. Law; and many English publications of the times had been occasionally added. From this slender beginning I have gradually formed a numerous and select library, the foundation of my works, and the best comfort of my life, both at home and abroad. On the receipt of the first quarter, a large share of my allowance was appropriated to my literary wants. I cannot forget the joy with which I exchanged a bank-note of twenty pounds for the twenty volumes of the *Memoirs of the Academy of Inscriptions;* nor would it have been easy, by any other expenditure of the same sum, to have procured so large and lasting a fund of rational amusement. I could not yet find leisure or courage to renew the pursuit of the Greek language, excepting by reading the lessons of the Old and New Testament every Sunday, when I attended the family to church. The series of my Latin authors was less strenuously completed; but the acquisition, by inheritance

or purchase, of the best editions of Cicero, Quintilian, Livy, Tacitus, Ovid, etc., afforded a fair prospect, which I seldom neglected.

As I am now entering on a more ample field of society and study, I can only hope to avoid a vain and prolix garrulity by overlooking the vulgar crowd of my acquaintance, and confining myself to such intimate friends among books and men as are best entitled to my notice by their own merit and reputation, or by the deep impression which they have left on my mind. Yet I will embrace this occasion of recommending to the young student a practice which about this time I myself adopted. After glancing my eye over the design and order of a new book, I suspended the perusal till I had finished the task of self-examination, till I had revolved, in a solitary walk, all that I knew or believed or had thought on the subject of the whole work, or of some particular chapter: I was then qualified to discern how much the author added to my original stock; and if I was sometimes satisfied by the agreement, I was sometimes armed by the opposition, of our ideas. The favorite companions of my leisure were our English writers since the Revolution: they breathe the spirit of reason and liberty; and they most seasonably contributed to restore the purity of my own language, which had been corrupted by the long use of a foreign idiom. By the judicious advice of Mr. Mallet, I was directed to the writings of Swift and Addison; wit and simplicity are their common attributes; but the style of Swift is supported by manly original vigor; that of Addison is adorned by the female graces of elegance and mildness. The old reproach, that no British altars had been raised to the Muse of History, was recently disproved by the first performances of Robertson and Hume, the histories of Scotland and of the Stuarts. I will assume the presumption of saying that I was not unworthy to read them: nor will I disguise my different feelings in the repeated perusals. The perfect composition, the nervous language, the well-turned periods of Dr. Robertson, inflamed me to the ambitious hope that I might one day tread in his footsteps: the calm philosophy, the careless inimitable beauties of his friend and rival, often forced me to close the volume with a mixed sensation of delight and despair.

The design of my first work, the *Essay on the Study of Literature,* was suggested by a refinement of vanity, the desire of justifying and praising the object of a favorite pursuit. In France, to which my ideas were confined, the learning and language of Greece and Rome were neglected by a philosophic age. The guardian of those studies, the Academy of Inscriptions, was degraded to the lowest rank among the three royal societies of Paris: the new appellation of Erudits was contemptuously applied to the successors of Lipsius and Casaubon; and I was provoked to hear (see M. d'Alembert, *Discours Préliminaire à l'Encyclopédie*) that the exercise of the memory, their sole merit, had been superseded by the nobler faculties of the imagination and the judgment. I was ambitious of proving, by my own example, as well as by my precepts, that all the faculties of the mind may be exercised and displayed by the study of ancient literature; I began to select and adorn the various proofs and illustrations which had offered themselves in reading the classics; and the first pages or chapters of my *Essay* were composed before my departure from Lausanne. The hurry of the journey, and of the first weeks of my English life, suspended all thoughts of serious application: but my object was ever before my eyes; and no more than ten days, from the first to the eleventh of July, were suffered to elapse after my summer establishment at Buriton. My *Essay* was finished in about six weeks; and as soon as a fair copy had been transcribed by one of the French prisoners at Petersfield, I looked round for a critic and judge of my first performance. A writer can seldom be content with the doubtful recompense of solitary approbation; but a youth ignorant of the world, and of himself, must desire to weigh his talents in some scales less partial than his own: my conduct was natural, my motive laudable, my choice of Dr. Maty judicious and fortunate. By descent and education Dr. Maty, though born in Holland, might be considered as a Frenchman; but he was fixed in London by the practice of physic and an office in the British Museum. His reputation was justly founded on the eighteen volumes of the *Journal Britannique,* which he had supported, almost alone, with perseverance and success. This humble though useful labor, which had once been dignified by the

genius of Bayle and the learning of Le Clerc, was not disgraced by the taste, the knowledge, and the judgment of Maty: he exhibits a candid and pleasing view of the state of literature in England during a period of six years (January 1750—December 1755); and, far different from his angry son, he handles the rod of criticism with the tenderness and reluctance of a parent. The author of the *Journal Britannique* sometimes aspires to the character of a poet and philosopher: his style is pure and elegant; and in his virtues, or even in his defects, he may be ranked as one of the last disciples of the school of Fontenelle. His answer to my first letter was prompt and polite: after a careful examination he returned my manuscript, with some animadversion and much applause; and when I visited London in the ensuing winter, we discussed the design and execution in several free and familiar conversations. In a short excursion to Buriton I reviewed my *Essay,* according to his friendly advice; and after suppressing a third, adding a third, and altering a third, I consummated my first labor by a short preface, which is dated February 3rd, 1759. Yet I still shrunk from the press with the terrors of virgin modesty: the manuscript was safely deposited in my desk; and as my attention was engaged by new objects, the delay might have been prolonged till I had fulfilled the precept of Horace, "nonumque prematur in annum."[8] Father Sirmond, a learned Jesuit, was still more rigid, since he advised a young friend to expect the mature age of fifty before he gave himself or his writings to the public (Olivet, *Histoire de l'Académie Française,* tom. ii. p. 143). The counsel was singular; but it is still more singular that it should have been approved by the example of the author. Sirmond was himself fifty-five years of age when he published (in 1614) his first work, an edition of Sidonius Apollinaris, with many valuable annotations. (See his Life, before the great edition of his works in five volumes folio, Paris, 1696, è Typographiâ Regiâ.)

Two years elapsed in silence: but in the spring of 1761 I yielded to the authority of a parent, and complied, like a pious son, with the wish of my own heart. My private re-

[8] "Let it be kept in the desk for nine years."—Horace, *De Arte Poetica,* l. 388.

solves were influenced by the state of Europe. About this time the belligerent powers had made and accepted overtures of peace; our English plenipotentiaries were named to assist at the Congress of Augsburg, which never met: I wished to attend them as a gentleman or as secretary; and my father fondly believed that the proof of some literary talents might introduce me to public notice and second the recommendations of my friends. After a last revisal I consulted with Mr. Mallet and Dr. Maty, who approved the design and promoted the execution. Mr. Mallet, after hearing me read my manuscript, received it from my hands, and delivered it into those of Becket, with whom he made an agreement in my name; an easy agreement: I required only a certain number of copies; and, without transferring my property, I devolved on the bookseller the charges and profits of the edition. Dr. Maty undertook, in my absence, to correct the sheets: he inserted, without my knowledge, an elegant and flattering epistle to the author; which is composed, however, with so much art, that, in case of a defeat, his favorable report might have been ascribed to the indulgence of a friend for the rash attempt of a *young English* gentleman. The work was printed and published, under the title of "Essai sur l'Etude de la Littérature, à Londres, chez T. Becket et P. A. de Hondt, 1761," in a small volume in duodecimo: my dedication to my father, a proper and pious address, was composed the 28th of May: Dr. Maty's letter is dated the 16th of June; and I received the first copy (June 23rd) at Alresford, two days before I marched with the Hampshire militia. Some weeks afterwards, on the same ground, I presented my book to the late Duke of York, who breakfasted in Colonel Pitt's tent.

By my father's direction, and Mallet's advice, many literary gifts were distributed to several eminent characters in England and France; two books were sent to the Count de Caylus, and the Duchesse d'Aiguillon, at Paris: I had reserved twenty copies for my friends at Lausanne, as the first fruits of my education, and a grateful token of my remembrance: and on all these persons I levied an unavoidable tax of civility and compliment. It is not surprising that a work, of which the style and sentiments were so totally for-

eign, should have been more successful abroad than at home. I was delighted by the copious extracts, the warm commendations, and the flattering predictions of the journals of France and Holland: and the next year (1762) a new edition (I believe at Geneva) extended the fame, or at least the circulation, of the work. In England it was received with cold indifference, little read, and speedily forgotten; a small impression was slowly dispersed; the bookseller murmured, and the author (had his feelings been more exquisite) might have wept over the blunders and baldness of the English translation. The publication of my *History* fifteen years afterwards revived the memory of my first performance, and the *Essay* was eagerly sought in the shops. But I refused the permission which Becket solicited of reprinting it: the public curiosity was imperfectly satisfied by a pirated copy of the booksellers of Dublin; and when a copy of the original edition has been discovered in a sale, the primitive value of half-a-crown has risen to the fanciful price of a guinea or thirty shillings.

Upon the whole, I may apply to the first labor of my pen the speech of a far superior artist, when he surveyed the first productions of his pencil. After viewing some portraits which he had painted in his youth, my friend Sir Joshua Reynolds acknowledged to me that he was rather humbled than flattered by the comparison with his present works; and that, after so much time and study, he had conceived his improvement to be much greater than he found it to have been.

I have already hinted that the publication of my *Essay* was delayed till I had embraced the military profession. I shall now amuse myself with the recollection of an active scene, which bears no affinity to any other period of my studious and social life.

In the outset of a glorious war the English people had been defended by the aid of German mercenaries. A national militia has been the cry of every patriot since the Revolution; and this measure, both in parliament and in the field, was supported by the country gentlemen or Tories, who insensibly transferred their loyalty to the House of Hanover: in the language of Mr. Burke, they have changed the idol, but

they have preserved the idolatry. In the act of offering our names and receiving our commissions as major and captain in the Hampshire regiment (June 12, 1759), we had not supposed that we should be dragged away, my father from his farm, myself from my books, and condemned, during two years and a half (May 10, 1760—December 23, 1762), to a wandering life of military servitude. But a weekly or monthly exercise of thirty thousand provincials would have left them useless and ridiculous; and after the pretense of an invasion had vanished, the popularity of Mr. Pitt gave a sanction to the illegal step of keeping them till the end of the war under arms, in constant pay and duty, and at a distance from their respective homes. When the king's order for our embodying came down, it was too late to retreat, and too soon to repent. The South battalion of the Hampshire militia was a small independent corps of four hundred and seventy-six officers and men, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Thomas Worsley, who, after a prolix and passionate contest, delivered us from the tyranny of the Lord Lieutenant, the Duke of Bolton. My proper station, as first captain, was at the head of my own, and afterwards of the grenadier company; but in the absence, or even in the presence, of the two field officers, I was entrusted by my friend and my father with the effective labor of dictating the orders, and exercising the battalion. With the help of an original journal, I could write the history of my bloodless and inglorious campaigns; but as these events have lost much of their importance in my own eyes, they shall be dispatched in a few words.

From Winchester, the first place of assembly (June 4, 1760), we were removed, at our own request, for the benefit of a foreign education. By the arbitrary, and often capricious, orders of the War Office, the battalion successively marched to the pleasant and hospitable Blandford (June 17); to Hilsea barracks, a seat of disease and discord (September 1); to Cranbrook in the Weald of Kent (December 11); to the sea-coast of Dover (December 27); to Winchester camp (June 25, 1761); to the populous and disorderly town of Devizes (October 23); to Salisbury (February 28, 1762); to our beloved Blandford a second time (March 9); and finally, to the fashionable resort of Southampton (June 2),

where the colors were fixed till our final dissolution (December 23). On the beach at Dover we had exercised in sight of the Gallic shores. But the most splendid and useful scene of our life was a four months' encampment on Winchester Down, under the command of the Earl of Effingham. Our army consisted of the Thirty-fourth Regiment of Foot and six militia corps. The consciousness of defects was stimulated by friendly emulation. We improved our time and opportunities in morning and evening field-days; and in the general reviews the South Hampshire were rather a credit than a disgrace to the line. In our subsequent quarters of the Devizes and Blandford we advanced with a quick step in our military studies; the ballot of the ensuing summer renewed our vigor and youth; and had the militia subsisted another year, we might have contested the prize with the most perfect of our brethren.

The loss of so many busy and idle hours was not compensated by any elegant pleasure; and my temper was insensibly soured by the society of our rustic officers. In every state there exists, however, a balance of good and evil. The habits of a sedentary life were usefully broken by the duties of an active profession: in the healthful exercise of the field I hunted with a battalion, instead of a pack; and at that time I was ready, at any hour of the day or night, to fly from quarters to London, from London to quarters, on the slightest call of private or regimental business. But my principal obligation to the militia was the making me an Englishman and a soldier. After my foreign education, with my reserved temper, I should long have continued a stranger to my native country, had I not been shaken in this various scene of new faces and new friends; had not experience forced me to feel the characters of our leading men, the state of parties, the forms of office, and the operation of our civil and military system. In this peaceful service I imbibed the rudiments of the language and science of tactics, which opened a new field of study and observation. I diligently read and meditated the *Mémoires Militaires* of Quintus Icilius (Mr. Guichardt), the only writer who has united the merits of a professor and a veteran. The discipline and evolutions of a modern battalion gave me a clearer notion of the phalanx

and the legion; and the captain of the Hampshire grenadiers (the reader may smile) has not been useless to the historian of the Roman Empire.

A youth of any spirit is fired even by the play of arms, and in the first sallies of my enthusiasm I had seriously attempted to embrace the regular profession of a soldier. But this military fever was cooled by the enjoyment of our mimic Bellona, who soon unveiled to my eyes her naked deformity. How often did I sigh for my proper station in society and letters! How often (a proud comparison) did I repeat the complaint of Cicero in the command of a provincial army! "Clitellæ bovi sunt impositæ. Est incredibile quàm me negotii tædeat. Non habet satis magnum campum ille tibi non ignotus cursus animi; et industriæ meæ præclara opera cessat. Lucem, *libros,* urbem, domum, vos desidero. Sed feram, ut potero; sit modo annuum. Si prorogatur, actum est."[9] From a service without danger I might indeed have retired without disgrace; but as often as I hinted a wish of resigning, my fetters were riveted by the friendly entreaties of the colonel, the parental authority of the major, and my own regard for the honor and welfare of the battalion. When I felt that my personal escape was impracticable, I bowed my neck to the yoke: my servitude was protracted far beyond the annual patience of Cicero; and it was not till after the preliminaries of peace that I received my discharge, from the act of government which disembodied the militia.

When I complain of the loss of time, justice to myself and to the militia must throw the greatest part of that reproach on the first seven or eight months, while I was obliged to learn as well as to teach. The dissipation of Blandford, and the disputes of Portsmouth, consumed the hours which were not employed in the field; and amid the perpetual hurry of an inn, a barrack, or a guard-room, all literary ideas were

[9] "The paniers of the ass have been put on the ox; it is incredible how tired I am of the whole business. The activity of my mind, wherewith you are not unacquainted, has not sufficient scope wherein to exert itself, and the notable results of my industry go for nothing. I long for fame, books, city life, and my home. If I can, I shall endure it, provided the limit be only one year; if it is prolonged all is at an end."—*Epist. ad Atticum,* lib. v. 15.

banished from my mind. After this long fast, the longest which I have ever known, I once more tasted at Dover the pleasures of reading and thinking; and the hungry appetite with which I opened a volume of Tully's philosophical works is still present to my memory. Amidst the tumult of Winchester camp I sometimes thought and read in my tent; in the more settled quarters of the Devizes, Blandford, and Southampton, I always secured a separate lodging and the necessary books; and in the summer of 1762, while the new militia was raising, I enjoyed at Beriton two or three months of literary repose. On every march, in every journey, Horace was always in my pocket, and often in my hand.

After his oracle Dr. Johnson, my friend Sir Joshua Reynolds denies all original genius, any natural propensity of the mind to one art or science rather than another. Without engaging in a metaphysical or rather verbal dispute, I *know*, by experience, that from my early youth I aspired to the character of an historian. While I served in the militia, before and after the publication of my *Essay*, this idea ripened in my mind; nor can I paint in more lively colors the feelings of the moment than by transcribing some passages, under their respective dates, from a journal which I kept at that time.

BERITON, APRIL 14, 1761

(*In a short excursion from Dover*)

"Having thought of several subjects for an historical composition, I chose the expedition of Charles VIII. of France into Italy. I read two memoirs of Mr. de Foncemagne in the *Academy of Inscriptions* (tom. xvii. p. 539-607), and abstracted them. I likewise finished this day a dissertation, in which I examined the right of Charles VIII. to the crown of Naples, and the rival claims of the House of Anjou and Arragon: it consists of ten folio pages, besides large notes."

BERITON, AUGUST 4, 1761

(*In a week's excursion from Winchester camp*)

"After having long revolved subjects for my intended historical essay, I renounced my first thought of the expedi-

tion of Charles VIII. as too remote from us, and rather an introduction to great events than great and important in itself. I successively chose and rejected the crusade of Richard I., the barons' wars against John and Henry III., the history of Edward the Black Prince, the lives and comparisons of Henry V. and the Emperor Titus, the life of Sir Philip Sidney, and that of the Marquis of Montrose. At length I have fixed on Sir Walter Raleigh for my hero. His eventful story is varied by the characters of the soldier and sailor, the courtier and historian; and it may afford such a fund of materials as I desire, which have not yet been properly manufactured. At present I cannot attempt the execution of this work. Free leisure, and the opportunity of consulting many books, both printed and manuscript, are as necessary as they are impossible to be attained in my present way of life. However, to acquire a general insight into my subject and resources, I read the *Life of Sir Walter Raleigh* by Dr. Birch, his copious article in the *General Dictionary* by the same hand, and the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and James I. in Hume's *History of England.*"

BERITON, JANUARY 1762

(*In a month's absence from the Devizes*)

"During this interval of repose I again turned my thoughts to Sir Walter Raleigh, and looked more closely into my materials. I read the two volumes in quarto of the *Bacon Papers,* published by Dr. Birch; the *Fragmenta Regalia* of Sir Robert Naunton; Mallet's *Life of Lord Bacon,* and the political treatises of that great man in the first volume of his works, with many of his letters in the second; Sir William Monson's *Naval Tracts;* and the elaborate *Life of Sir Walter Raleigh,* which Mr. Oldys has prefixed to the best edition of his *History of the World.* My subject opens upon me, and in general improves upon a nearer prospect."

BERITON, JULY 26, 1762

(*During my summer residence*)

"I am afraid of being reduced to drop my hero; but my time has not, however, been lost in the research of his story,

and of a memorable era of our English annals. The *Life of Sir Walter Raleigh,* by Oldys, is a very poor performance; a servile panegyric, or flat apology, tediously minute, and composed in a dull and affected style. Yet the author was a man of diligence and learning, who had read everything relative to his subject, and whose ample collections are arranged with perspicuity and method. Excepting some anecdotes lately revealed in the *Sidney* and *Bacon Papers,* I know not what I should be able to add. My ambition (exclusive of the uncertain merit of style and sentiment) must be confined to the hope of giving a good abridgment of Oldys. I have even the disappointment of finding some parts of this copious work very dry and barren; and these parts are unluckily some of the most characteristic; Raleigh's colony of Virginia, his quarrels with Essex, the true secret of his conspiracy, and, above all, the detail of his private life, the most essential and important to a biographer. My best resource would be in the circumjacent history of the times, and perhaps in some digressions artfully introduced, like the fortunes of the Peripatetic philosophy in the portrait of Lord Bacon. But the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. are the periods of English history which have been the most variously illustrated; and what new lights could I reflect on a subject which has exercised the accurate industry of *Birch,* the lively and curious acuteness of *Walpole,* the critical spirit of *Hurd,* the vigorous sense of *Mallet* and *Robertson,* and the impartial philosophy of *Hume?* Could I even surmount these obstacles, I should shrink with terror from the modern history of England, where every character is a problem, and every reader a friend or an enemy; where a writer is supposed to hoist a flag of party, and is devoted to damnation by the adverse faction. Such would be *my* reception at home: and abroad, the historian of Raleigh must encounter an indifference far more bitter than censure or reproach. The events of his life are interesting; but his character is ambiguous, his actions are obscure, his writings are English, and his fame is confined to the narrow limits of our language and our island. I must embrace a safer and more extensive theme.

"There is one which I should prefer to all others, *The*

*History of the Liberty of the Swiss,* of that independence which a brave people rescued from the House of Austria, defended against a dauphin of France, and finally sealed with the blood of Charles of Burgundy. From such a theme, so full of public spirit, of military glory, of examples of virtue, of lessons of government, the dullest stranger would catch fire: what may not *I* hope, whose talents, whatsoever they may be, would be inflamed with the zeal of patriotism! But the materials of this history are inaccessible to me, fast locked in the obscurity of an old barbarous German dialect, of which I am totally ignorant, and which I cannot resolve to learn for this sole and peculiar purpose.

"I have another subject in view, which is the contrast of the former history: the one a poor, warlike, virtuous republic, which emerges into glory and freedom; the other a commonwealth, soft, opulent, and corrupt; which, by just degrees, is precipitated from the abuse to the loss of her liberty: both lessons are, perhaps, equally instructive. This second subject is, *The History of the Republic of Florence, under the House of Medicis:* a period of one hundred and fifty years, which rises or descends from the dregs of the Florentine democracy to the title and dominion of Cosmo de Medicis in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. I might deduce a chain of revolutions not unworthy of the pen of Vertot; singular men, and singular events; the Medicis four times expelled, and as often recalled; and the Genius of Freedom reluctantly yielding to the arms of Charles V. and the policy of Cosmo. The character and fate of Savonarola, and the revival of arts and letters in Italy, will be essentially connected with the elevation of the family and the fall of the republic. The Medicis, stirps quasi fataliter nata ad instauranda vel fovenda studia (*Lipsius ad Germanos et Gallos,* Epist. viii.), were illustrated by the patronage of learning; and enthusiasm was the most formidable weapon of their adversaries. On this splendid subject I shall most probably fix; but *when,* or *where,* or *how* will it be executed? I behold in a dark and doubtful perspective

Res altâ terrâ, et caligine mersas."[10]

[10] "Things plunged in the depths of the earth and in darkness."—*Æneid,* vi. 267.

The youthful habits of the language and manners of France had left in my mind an ardent desire of revisiting the Continent on a larger and more liberal plan. According to the law of custom, and perhaps of reason, foreign travel completes the education of an English gentleman: my father had consented to my wish, but I was detained above four years by my rash engagement in the militia. I eagerly grasped the first moments of freedom: three or four weeks in Hampshire and London were employed in the preparations of my journey, and the farewell visits of friendship and civility: my last act in town was to applaud Mallet's new tragedy of *Elvira;* a post-chaise conveyed me to Dover, the packet to Boulogne, and such was my diligence that I reached Paris on the 28th of January 1763, only thirty-six days after the disbanding of the militia. Two or three years were loosely defined for the term of my absence; and I was left at liberty to spend that time in such places and in such a manner as was most agreeable to my taste and judgment.

In this first visit I passed three months and a half (January 28—May 9), and a much longer space might have been agrecably filled without any intercourse with the natives. At home we are content to move in the daily round of pleasure and business; and a scene which is always present is supposed to be within our knowledge, or at least within our power. But in a foreign country, curiosity is our business and our pleasure; and the traveler, conscious of his ignorance, and covetous of his time, is diligent in the search and the view of every object that can deserve his attention. I devoted many hours of the morning to the circuit of Paris and the neighborhood, to the visit of churches and palaces conspicuous by their architecture, to the royal manufactures, collections of books and pictures, and all the various treasures of art, of learning, and of luxury.

But the principal end of my journey was to enjoy the society of a polished and amiable people, in whose favor I was strongly prejudiced, and to converse with some authors, whose conversation, as I fondly imagined, must be far more pleasing and instructive than their writings. Among the men of letters whom I saw, d'Alembert and Diderot held the foremost rank in merit, or at least in fame. I shall content myself

with enumerating the well-known names of the Count de Caylus, of the Abbé de la Bleterie, Barthelemy, Reynal, Arnaud, of Messieurs de la Condamine, du Clos, de Ste. Palayé, de Bougainville, Caperonnier, de Guignes, Suard, etc., without attempting to discriminate the shades of their characters, or the degrees of our connection. Alone, in a morning visit, I commonly found the artists and authors of Paris less vain, and more reasonable, than in the circles of their equals, with whom they mingle in the houses of the rich. Four days in a week I had a place, without invitation, at the hospitable tables of Mesdames Geoffrin and du Bocage, of the celebrated Helvetius, and of the Baron d'Olbach. In these symposia the pleasures of the table were improved by lively and liberal conversation; the company was select, though various and voluntary.

The society of Madame du Bocage was more soft and moderate than that of her rivals, and the evening conversations of M. de Foncemagne were supported by the good sense and learning of the principal members of the Academy of Inscriptions. The opera and the Italians I occasionally visited; but the French theater, both in tragedy and comedy, was my daily and favorite amusement. Two famous actresses then divided the public applause. For my own part, I preferred the consummate art of the Clairon to the intemperate sallies of the Dumesnil, which were extolled by her admirers as the genuine voice of nature and passion. Fourteen weeks insensibly stole away; but had I been rich and independent, I should have prolonged, and perhaps have fixed, my residence at Paris.

Between the expensive style of Paris and of Italy it was prudent to interpose some months of tranquil simplicity, and at the thoughts of Lausanne I again lived in the pleasures and studies of my early youth. Shaping my course through Dijon and Besançon, in the last of which places I was kindly entertained by my cousin Acton, I arrived in the month of May 1763 on the banks of the Leman Lake. It had been my intention to pass the Alps in the autumn; but such are the simple attractions of the place, that the year had almost expired before my departure from Lausanne in the ensuing spring. An absence of five years had not made much altera-

tion in manners, or even in persons. My old friends, of both sexes, hailed my voluntary return; the most genuine proof of my attachment. They had been flattered by the present of my book, the produce of their soil; and the good Pavilliard shed tears of joy as he embraced a pupil whose literary merit he might fairly impute to his own labors.

On the 25th of June 1765, I arrived at my father's house; and the five years and a half between my travels and my father's death (1770) are the portion of my life which I passed with the least enjoyment, and which I remember with the least satisfaction. Every spring I attended the monthly meeting and exercise of the militia at Southampton; and by the resignation of my father, and the death of Sir Thomas Worsley, I was successively promoted to the rank of major and lieutenant-colonel commandant; but I was each year more disgusted with the inn, the wine, the company, and the tiresome repetition of annual attendance and daily exercise.

The renewal, or perhaps the improvement, of my English life was embittered by the alteration of my own feelings. At the age of twenty-one I was, in my proper station of a youth, delivered from the yoke of education, and delighted with the comparative state of liberty and affluence. My filial obedience was natural and easy; and in the gay prospect of futurity my ambition did not extend beyond the enjoyment of my books, my leisure, and my patrimonial estate, undisturbed by the cares of a family and the duties of a profession. But in the militia I was armed with power; in my travels I was exempt from control; and as I approached, as I gradually passed my thirtieth year, I began to feel the desire of being master in my own house. The most gentle authority will sometimes frown without reason, the most cheerful submission will sometimes murmur without cause; and such is the law of our imperfect nature, that we must either command or obey; that our personal liberty is supported by the obsequiousness of our own dependents. While so many of my acquaintance were married or in parliament, or advancing with a rapid step in the various roads of honor and fortune, I stood alone, immovable and insignificant; for after the monthly meeting of 1770 I had even withdrawn myself from the militia, by the resignation of an empty

and barren commission. My temper is not susceptible of envy, and the view of successful merit has always excited my warmest applause. The miseries of a vacant life were never known to a man whose hours were insufficient for the inexhaustible pleasures of study. But I lamented that at the proper age I had not embraced the lucrative pursuits of the law or of trade, the chances of civil office or India adventure, or even the fat slumbers of the church; and my repentance became more lively as the loss of time was more irretrievable. Experience showed me the use of grafting my private consequence on the importance of a great professional body; the benefits of those firm connections which are cemented by hope and interest, by gratitude and emulation, by the mutual exchange of services and favors. From the emoluments of a profession I might have derived an ample fortune, or a competent income, instead of being stinted to the same narrow allowance, to be increased only by an event which I sincerely deprecated. The progress and the knowledge of our domestic disorders aggravated my anxiety, and I began to apprehend that I might be left in my old age without the fruits either of industry or inheritance.

In the first summer after my return, whilst I enjoyed at Beriton the society of my friend Deyverdun, our daily conversations expatiated over the field of ancient and modern literature; and we freely discussed my studies, my first *Essay*, and my future projects. The *Decline and Fall of Rome* I still contemplated at an awful distance: but the two historical designs which had balanced my choice were submitted to his taste; and in the parallel between the Revolutions of Florence and Switzerland, our common partiality for a country which was *his* by birth, and *mine* by adoption, inclined the scale in favor of the latter. According to the plan, which was soon conceived and digested, I embraced a period of two hundred years, from the association of the three peasants of the Alps to the plenitude and prosperity of the Helvetic body in the sixteenth century. I should have described the deliverance and victory of the Swiss, who have never shed the blood of their tyrants but in a field of battle; the laws and manners of the confederate states; the splendid trophies of the Austrian, Burgundian, and Italian wars; and the wis-

dom of a nation who, after some sallies of martial adventure, has been content to guard the blessings of peace with the sword of freedom.

——Manus hæc inimica tyrannis
Ense petit placidam sub libertate quietem.[11]

My judgment, as well as my enthusiasm, was satisfied with the glorious theme; and the assistance of Deyverdun seemed to remove an insuperable obstacle. The French or Latin memorials, of which I was not ignorant, are inconsiderable in number and weight; but in the perfect acquaintance of my friend with the German language I found the key of a more valuable collection. The most necessary books were procured; he translated, for my use, the folio volume of Schilling, a copious and contemporary relation of the war of Burgundy; we read and marked the most interesting parts of the great chronicle of Tschudi; and by his labor, or that of an inferior assistant, large extracts were made from the History of Lauffer and the Dictionary of Lew; yet such was the distance and delay, that two years elapsed in these preparatory steps; and it was late in the third summer (1767) before I entered, with these slender materials, on the more agreeable task of composition. A specimen of my *History,* the first book, was read the following winter in a literary society of foreigners in London; and as the author was unknown, I listened, without observation, to the free strictures, and unfavorable sentence, of my judges. The momentary sensation was painful; but their condemnation was ratified by my cooler thoughts. I delivered my imperfect sheets to the flames, and for ever renounced a design in which some expense, much labor, and more time, had been so vainly consumed.

In the fifteen years between my *Essay on the Study of Literature* and the first volume of the *Decline and Fall* (1761-1776), a criticism on Warburton, and some articles in the journal, were my sole publications. It is more especially incumbent on me to mark the employment, or to confess the waste of time, from my travels to my father's death, an

[11] This hand hostile to tyrants seeks even by the sword to ensure peace with liberty.

interval in which I was not diverted by any professional duties from the labors and pleasures of a studious life. 1. As soon as I was released from the fruitless task of the Swiss revolutions (1768), I began gradually to advance from the wish to the hope, from the hope to the design, from the design to the execution, of my historical work, of whose limits and extent I had yet a very inadequate notion. The classics, as low as Tacitus, the younger Pliny, and Juvenal, were my old and familiar companions. I insensibly plunged into the ocean of the Augustan history; and in the descending series I investigated, with my pen almost always in my hand, the original records, both Greek and Latin, from Dion Cassius to Ammianus Marcellinus, from the reign of Trajan to the last age of the Western Cæsars. The subsidiary rays of medals and inscriptions, of geography and chronology, were thrown on their proper objects; and I applied the collections of Tillemont, whose inimitable accuracy almost assumes the character of genius, to fix and arrange within my reach the loose and scattered atoms of historical information. Through the darkness of the middle ages I explored my way in the *Annals* and *Antiquities of Italy* of the learned Muratori; and diligently compared them with the parallel or transverse lines of Sigonius and Maffei, Baronius and Pagi, till I almost grasped the ruins of Rome in the fourteenth century, without suspecting that this final chapter must be attained by the labor of six quartos and twenty years. Among the books which I purchased, the *Theodosian Code,* with the commentary of James Godefroy, must be gratefully remembered: I used it (and much I used it) as a work of history rather than of jurisprudence: but in every light it may be considered as a full and capacious repository of the political state of the empire in the fourth and fifth centuries. As I believed, and as I still believe, that the propagation of the Gospel, and the triumph of the church, are inseparably connected with the decline of the Roman monarchy, I weighed the causes and effects of the revolution, and contrasted the narratives and apologies of the Christians themselves, with the glances of candor or enmity which the Pagans have cast on the rising sects. The Jewish and Heathen testimonies, as they are collected and illustrated by Dr. Lardner, directed,

without superseding, my search of the originals; and in an ample dissertation on the miraculous darkness of the passion, I privately drew my conclusions from the silence of an unbelieving age. I have assembled the preparatory studies, directly or indirectly relative to my history; but, in strict equity, they must be spread beyond this period of my life, over the two summers (1771 and 1772) that elapsed between my father's death and my settlement in London. 2. In a free conversation with books and men it would be endless to enumerate the names and characters of all who are introduced to our acquaintance; but in this general acquaintance we may select the degrees of friendship and esteem. According to the wise maxim, *Multum legere potius quam multa,*[12] I reviewed, again and again, the immortal works of the French and English, the Latin and Italian classics. My Greek studies (though less assiduous than I designed) maintained and extended my knowledge of that incomparable idiom. Homer and Xenophon were still my favorite authors; and I had almost prepared for the press an essay on the *Cyropædia,* which, in my own judgment, is not unhappily labored. After a certain age the new publications of merit are the sole food of the many; and the most austere student will be often tempted to break the line, for the sake of indulging his own curiosity, and of providing the topics of fashionable currency. A more respectable motive may be assigned for the third perusal of Blackstone's *Commentaries,* and a copious and critical abstract of that English work was my first serious production in my native language. 3. My literary leisure was much less complete and independent than it might appear to the eye of a stranger. In the hurry of London I was destitute of books; in the solitude of Hampshire I was not master of my time. My quiet was gradually disturbed by our domestic anxiety, and I should be ashamed of my unfeeling philosophy had I found much time or taste for study in the last fatal summer (1770) of my father's decay and dissolution.

The disembodying of the militia at the close of the war (1763) had restored the major (a new Cincinnatus) to a life of agriculture. His labors were useful, his pleasures

[12] To read the same book many times rather than many books but once.

innocent, his wishes moderate; and my father *seemed* to enjoy the state of happiness which is celebrated by poets and philosophers as the most agreeable to nature, and the least accessible to fortune.

> Beatus ille, qui procul negotiis
> (Ut prisca gens mortalium)
> Paterna rura bobus exercet suis,
> Solutus omni fœnore.[13] Hor. *Epod.* ii.

But the last indispensable condition, the freedom from debt, was wanting to my father's felicity; and the vanities of his youth were severely punished by the solicitude and sorrow of his declining age. The first mortgage, on my return from Lausanne (1758), had afforded him a partial and transient relief. The annual demand of interest and allowance was a heavy deduction from his income; the militia was a source of expense, the farm in his hands was not a profitable adventure, he was loaded with the costs and damages of an obsolete lawsuit; and each year multiplied the number and exhausted the patience of his creditors. Under these painful circumstances, I consented to an additional mortgage, to the sale of Putney, and to every sacrifice that could alleviate his distress. But he was no longer capable of a rational effort, and his reluctant delays postponed, not the evils themselves, but the remedies of those evils (*remedia malorum potius quam mala differebat*).[14] The pangs of shame, tenderness, and self-reproach incessantly preyed on his vitals; his constitution was broken; he lost his strength and his sight: the rapid progress of a dropsy admonished him of his end, and he sunk into the grave on the 10th of November 1770, in the sixty-fourth year of his age.

As soon as I had paid the last solemn duties to my father, and obtained, from time and reason, a tolerable composure of mind, I began to form a plan of an independent life, most adapted to my circumstances and inclination. Yet so intri-

[13] Like the first mortals, blest is he,
From debts, and usury, and business free,
With his own team who plows the soil,
Which grateful once confess'd his father's toil.
Francis.

[14] Deferring the remedies of the evils, not checking the evils themselves.

cate was the net, my efforts were so awkward and feeble, that nearly two years (November 1770—October 1772) were suffered to elapse before I could disentangle myself from the management of the farm, and transfer my residence from Beriton to a house in London. During this interval I continued to divide my year between town and the country; but my new situation was brightened by hope; my stay in London was prolonged into the summer; and the uniformity of the summer was occasionally broken by visits and excursions at a distance from home. The gratification of my desires (they were not immoderate) has been seldom disappointed by the want of money or credit; my pride was never insulted by the visit of an importunate tradesman; and my transient anxiety for the past or future has been dispelled by the studious or social occupation of the present hour. My conscience does not accuse me of any act of extravagance or injustice, and the remnant of my estate affords an ample and honorable provision for my declining age. I shall not expatiate on my economical affairs, which cannot be instructive or amusing to the reader. It is a rule of prudence, as well as of politeness, to reserve such confidence for the ear of a private friend, without exposing our situation to the envy or pity of strangers; for envy is productive of hatred, and pity borders too nearly on contempt. Yet I may believe, and even assert, that, in circumstances more indigent or more wealthy, I should never have accomplished the task, or acquired the fame, of an historian; that my spirit would have been broken by poverty and contempt; and that my industry might have been relaxed in the labor and luxury of a superfluous fortune.

I had now attained the first of earthly blessings, independence: I was the absolute master of my hours and actions: nor was I deceived in the hope that the establishment of my library in town would allow me to divide the day between study and society. Each year the circle of my acquaintance, the number of my dead and living companions, was enlarged. To a lover of books the shops and sales of London present irresistible temptations; and the manufacture of my history required a various and growing stock of materials. The militia, my travels, the House of Commons, the fame of an

author, contributed to multiply my connections: I was chosen a member of the fashionable clubs; and, before I left England in 1783, there were few persons of any eminence in the literary or political world to whom I was a stranger. It would most assuredly be in my power to amuse the reader with a gallery of portraits and a collection of anecdotes. But I have always condemned the practice of transforming a private memorial into a vehicle of satire or praise. By my own choice I passed in town the greatest part of the year; but whenever I was desirous of breathing the air of the country I possessed an hospitable retreat at Sheffield Place in Sussex, in the family of my valuable friend Mr. Holroyd, whose character, under the name of Lord Sheffield, his since been more conspicuous to the public.

No sooner was I settled in my house and library than I undertook the composition of the first volume of my *History*. At the outset all was dark and doubtful; even the title of the work, the true era of the Decline and Fall of the Empire, the limits of the introduction, the division of the chapters, and the order of the narrative; and I was often tempted to cast away the labor of seven years. The style of an author should be the image of his mind, but the choice and command of language is the fruit of exercise. Many experiments were made before I could hit the middle tone between a dull chronicle and a rhetorical declamation: three times did I compose the first chapter, and twice the second and third, before I was tolerably satisfied with their effect. In the remainder of the way I advanced with a more equal and easy pace; but the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters have been reduced, by three successive revisals, from a large volume to their present size; and they might still be compressed, without any loss of facts or sentiments. An opposite fault may be imputed to the concise and superficial narrative of the first reigns from Commodus to Alexander; a fault of which I have never heard, except from Mr. Hume in his last journey to London. Such an oracle might have been consulted and obeyed with rational devotion; but I was soon disgusted with the modest practice of reading the manuscript to my friends. Of such friends some will praise from politeness, and some will criticize from vanity. The author

himself is the best judge of his own performance; no one has so deeply meditated on the subject; no one is so sincerely interested in the event.

By the friendship of Mr. (now Lord) Eliot, who had married my first-cousin, I was returned at the general election for the borough of Liskeard. I took my seat at the beginning of the memorable contest between Great Britain and America, and supported, with many a sincere and silent vote, the rights, though not, perhaps, the interest, of the mother-country. After a fleeting illusive hope, prudence condemned me to acquiesce in the humble station of a mute. I was not armed by nature and education with the intrepid energy of mind and voice,

Vincentem strepitus, et natum rebus agendis.[15]

Timidity was fortified by pride, and even the success of my pen discouraged the trial of my voice. But I assisted at the debates of a free assembly; I listened to the attack and defense of eloquence and reason; I had a near prospect of the characters, views, and passions of the first men of the age. The cause of government was ably vindicated by *Lord North,* a statesman of spotless integrity, a consummate master of debate, who could wield with equal dexterity the arms of reason and of ridicule. He was seated on the Treasury Bench between his Attorney- and Solicitor-General, the two pillars of the law and state, *magis pares quam similes;* [16] and the minister might indulge in a short slumber, whilst he was upholden on either hand by the majestic sense of *Thurlow,* and the skillful eloquence of *Wedderburne.* From the adverse side of the house an ardent and powerful opposition was supported by the lively declamation of *Barré,* the legal acuteness of *Dunning,* the profuse and philosophic fancy of *Burke,* and the argumentative vehemence of *Fox,* who, in the conduct of a party, approved himself equal to the conduct of an empire. By such men every operation of peace and war, every principle of justice or policy, every question of authority and freedom, was attacked and defended; and the subject of

[15] Fitted for action and to quell the tumultuous noise of the crowd.—Horace, *De Arte Poetica,* l. 82.

[16] Rather equal than alike.

the momentous contest was the union or separation of Great Britain and America. The eight sessions that I sat in parliament were a school of civil prudence, the first and most essential virtue of an historian.

The volume of my *History,* which had been somewhat delayed by the novelty and tumult of a first session, was now ready for the press. After the perilous adventure had been declined by my friend Mr. Elmsley, I agreed, upon easy terms, with Mr. Thomas Cadell, a respectable bookseller, and Mr. William Strahan, an eminent printer; and they undertook the care and risk of the publication, which derived more credit from the name of the shop than from that of the author. The last revisal of the proofs was submitted to my vigilance; and many blemishes of style, which had been invisible in the manuscript, were discovered and corrected in the printed sheet. So moderate were our hopes, that the original impression had been stinted to five hundred, till the number was doubled by the prophetic taste of Mr. Strahan. During this awful interval I was neither elated by the ambition of fame, nor depressed by the apprehension of contempt. My diligence and accuracy were attested by my own conscience. History is the most popular species of writing, since it can adapt itself to the highest or the lowest capacity. I had chosen an illustrious subject. Rome is familiar to the schoolboy and the statesman; and my narrative was deduced from the last period of classical reading. I had likewise flattered myself that an age of light and liberty would receive, without scandal, an inquiry into the human *causes* of the progress and establishment of Christianity.

I am at a loss how to describe the success of the work without betraying the vanity of the writer. The first impression was exhausted in a few days; a second and third edition were scarcely adequate to the demand; and the bookseller's property was twice invaded by the pirates of Dublin. My book was on every table, and almost on every toilette; the historian was crowned by the taste or fashion of the day; nor was the general voice disturbed by the barking of any *profane* critic. The favor of mankind is most freely bestowed on a new acquaintance of any original merit; and the mutual surprise of the public and their favorite is productive of those warm

sensibilities which at a second meeting can no longer be rekindled. If I listened to the music of praise, I was more seriously satisfied with the approbation of my judges. The candor of Dr. Robertson embraced his disciple. A letter from Mr. Hume overpaid the labor of ten years; but I have never presumed to accept a place in the triumvirate of British historians.

That curious and original letter will amuse the reader, and his gratitude should shield my free communication from the reproach of vanity.

"Edinburgh, 18th March, 1776.

"Dear Sir,—As I ran through your volume of history with great avidity and impatience, I cannot forbear discovering somewhat of the same impatience in returning you thanks for your agreeable present, and expressing the satisfaction which the performance has given me. Whether I consider the dignity of your style, the depth of your matter, or the extensiveness of your learning, I must regard the work as equally the object of esteem; and I own that, if I had not previously had the happiness of your personal acquaintance, such a performance from an Englishman in our age would have given me some surprise. You may smile at this sentiment, but, as it seems to me that your countrymen, for almost a whole generation, have given themselves up to barbarous and absurd faction, and have totally neglected all polite letters, I no longer expected any valuable production ever to come from them. I know it will give you pleasure (as it did me) to find that all the men of letters in this place concur in their admiration of your work, and in their anxious desire of your continuing it.

"When I heard of your undertaking (which was some time ago), I own I was a little curious to see how you would extricate yourself from the subject of your two last chapters. I think you have observed a very prudent temperament; but it was impossible to treat the subject so as not to give grounds of suspicion against you, and you may expect that a clamor will arise. This, if anything, will retard your success with the public; for in every other respect your work is calculated to be popular. But among many other marks of decline, the prevalence of superstition in England prognosticates the fall

of philosophy and decay of taste; and though nobody be more capable than you to revive them, you will probably find a struggle in your first advances.

"I see you entertain a great doubt with regard to the authenticity of the poems of Ossian. You are certainly right in so doing. It is indeed strange that any men of sense could have imagined it possible that above twenty thousand verses, along with numberless historical facts, could have been preserved by oral tradition during fifty generations, by the rudest, perhaps, of all the European nations, the most necessitous, the most turbulent, and the most unsettled. Where a supposition is so contrary to common sense, any positive evidence of it ought never to be regarded. Men run with great avidity to give their evidence in favor of what flatters their passions and their national prejudices. You are therefore over and above indulgent to us in speaking of the matter with hesitation.

"I must inform you that we are all very anxious to hear that you have fully collected the materials for your second volume, and that you are even considerably advanced in the composition of it. I speak this more in the name of my friends than in my own, as I cannot expect to live so long as to see the publication of it. Your ensuing volume will be more delicate than the preceding, but I trust in your prudence for extricating you from the difficulties; and, in all events, you have courage to despise the clamor of bigots.—I am, with great regard, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, DAVID HUME."

Some weeks afterwards I had the melancholy pleasure of seeing Mr. Hume in his passage through London; his body feeble, his mind firm. On the 25th of August of the same year (1776) he died, at Edinburgh, the death of a philosopher.

My second excursion to Paris was determined by the pressing invitation of M. and Madame Necker, who had visited England in the preceding summer. On my arrival I found M. Necker Director-General of the Finances, in the first bloom of power and popularity. His private fortune enabled him to support a liberal establishment; and his wife, whose

talents and virtues I had long admired, was admirably qualified to preside in the conversation of her table and drawing-room. As their friend I was introduced to the best company of both sexes; to the foreign ministers of all nations, and to the first names and characters of France, who distinguished me by such marks of civility and kindness as gratitude will not suffer me to forget, and modesty will not allow me to enumerate. The fashionable suppers often broke into the morning hours; yet I occasionally consulted the Royal Library, and that of the Abbey of St. Germain, and in the free use of their books at home I had always reason to praise the liberality of those institutions. The society of men of letters I neither courted nor declined; but I was happy in the acquaintance of M. de Buffon, who united with a sublime genius the most amiable simplicity of mind and manners.

Nearly two years had elapsed between the publication of my first and the commencement of my second volume; and the causes must be assigned of this long delay. 1. After a short holiday I indulged my curiosity in some studies of a very different nature, a course of anatomy, which was demonstrated by Doctor Hunter, and some lessons of chemistry, which were delivered by Mr. Higgins. The principles of these sciences, and a taste for books of natural history, contributed to multiply my ideas and images; and the anatomist and chemist may sometimes track me in their own snow. 2. I dived, perhaps too deeply, into the mud of the Arian controversy; and many days of reading, thinking, and writing were consumed in the pursuit of a phantom. 3. It is difficult to arrange, with order and perspicuity, the various transactions of the age of Constantine; and so much was I displeased with the first essay, that I committed to the flames above fifty sheets. 4. The six months of Paris and pleasure must be deducted from the account. But when I resumed my task I felt my improvement; I was now master of my style and subject, and, while the measure of my daily performance was enlarged, I discovered less reason to cancel or correct. It has always been my practice to cast a long paragraph in a single mold, to try it by my ear, to deposit it in my memory, but to suspend the action of the pen till I had given the last polish to my work. Shall I add, that I never found my mind

more vigorous, nor my composition more happy, than in the winter hurry of society and parliament?

Had I believed that the majority of English readers were so fondly attached even to the name and shadow of Christianity; had I foreseen that the pious, the timid, and the prudent would feel, or affect to feel, with such exquisite sensibility; I might, perhaps, have softened the two invidious chapters, which would create many enemies, and conciliate few friends. But the shaft was shot, the alarm was sounded, and I could only rejoice that, if the voice of our priests was clamorous and bitter, their hands were disarmed from the powers of persecution. I adhered to the wise resolution of trusting myself and my writings to the candor of the public, till Mr. Davies of Oxford presumed to attack, not the faith, but the fidelity, of the historian. *My Vindication,* expressive of less anger than contempt, amused for a moment the busy and idle metropolis; and the most rational part of the laity, and even of the clergy, appear to have been satisfied of my innocence and accuracy. I would not print this *Vindication* in quarto, lest it should be bound and preserved with the *History* itself. At the distance of twelve years I calmly affirm my judgment of Davies, Chelsum, etc. A victory over such antagonists was a sufficient humiliation. They however were rewarded in this world. Poor Chelsum was indeed neglected; and I dare not boast the making of Dr. Watson a bishop; he is a prelate of a large mind and liberal spirit: but I enjoyed the pleasure of giving a royal pension to Mr. Davies, and of collating Dr. Apthorpe to an archiepiscopal living. Their success encouraged the zeal of Taylor the Arian, and Milner the Methodist, with many others, whom it would be difficult to remember, and tedious to rehearse. The list of my adversaries, however, was graced with the more respectable names of Dr. Priestley, Sir David Dalrymple, and Dr. White; and every polemic, of either university, discharged his sermon or pamphlet against the impenetrable silence of the Roman historian. In his *History of the Corruptions of Christianity,* Dr. Priestley threw down his two gauntlets to Bishop Hurd and Mr. Gibbon. I declined the challenge in a letter, exhorting my opponent to enlighten the world by his philosophical discoveries, and to remember that the merit of his predecessor

Servetus is now reduced to a single passage, which indicates the smaller circulation of the blood through the lungs, from and to the heart. Instead of listening to this friendly advice, the dauntless philosopher of Birmingham continued to fire away his double battery against those who believed too little, and those who believed too much. *From my* replies he has nothing to hope or fear: but his Socinian shield has repeatedly been pierced by the mighty spear of Horsley, and his trumpet of sedition may at length awaken the magistrates of a free country.

The profession and rank of Sir David Dalrymple (now a Lord of Session) has given a more decent color to his style. But he scrutinized each separate passage of the two chapters with the dry minuteness of a special pleader; and as he was always solicitous to make, he may have succeeded sometimes in finding, a flaw. In his *Annals of Scotland* he has shown himself a diligent collector and an accurate critic.

I have praised, and I still praise, the eloquent sermons which were preached in St. Mary's pulpit at Oxford by Dr. White. If he assaulted me with some degree of illiberal acrimony, in such a place, and before such an audience, he was obliged to speak the language of the country. I smiled at a passage in one of his private letters to Mr. Badcock: "The part where we encounter Gibbon must be brilliant and striking."

In a sermon preached before the university of Cambridge, Dr. Edwards complimented a work "which can only perish with the language itself;" and esteems the author a formidable enemy. He is, indeed, astonished that more learning and ingenuity has not been shown in the defense of Israel; that the prelates and dignitaries of the church (alas, good man!) did not vie with each other whose stone should sink the deepest in the forehead of this Goliath.

Let me frankly own that I was startled at the first discharge of ecclesiastical ordnance; but as soon as I found that this empty noise was mischievous only in the intention, my fear was converted into indignation; and every feeling of indignation or curiosity has long since subsided in pure and placid indifference.

The prosecution of my *History* was soon afterwards

checked by another controversy of a very different kind. At the request of the Lord Chancellor, and of Lord Weymouth, then Secretary of State, I vindicated, against the French manifesto, the justice of the British arms. The whole correspondence of Lord Stormont, our late ambassador at Paris, was submitted to my inspection, and the *Mémoire Justificatif*, which I composed in French, was first approved by the Cabinet Ministers, and then delivered as a state paper to the courts of Europe. The style and manner are praised by Beaumarchais himself, who, in his private quarrel, attempted a reply; but he flatters me by ascribing the memoir to Lord Stormont; and the grossness of his invective betrays the loss of temper and of wit; he acknowledged that *le style ne seroit pas sans grace, ni la logique sans justesse*,[17] etc., if the facts were true which he undertakes to disprove. For these facts my credit is not pledged; I spoke as a lawyer from my brief; but the veracity of Beaumarchais may be estimated from the assertion that France, by the Treaty of Paris (1763), was limited to a certain number of ships of war. On the application of the Duke of Choiseul he was obliged to retract this daring falsehood.

Among the honorable connections which I had formed, I may justly be proud of the friendship of Mr. Wedderburne, at that time Attorney-General, who now illustrates the title of Lord Loughborough, and the office of Chief Justice of the Common Pleas. By his strong recommendation, and the favorable disposition of Lord North, I was appointed one of the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations; and my private income was enlarged by a clear addition of between seven and eight hundred pounds a year. The fancy of a hostile orator may paint in the strong colors of ridicule "the perpetual virtual adjournment, and the unbroken sitting vacation of the Board of Trade." But it must be allowed that our duty was not intolerably severe, and that I enjoyed many days and weeks of repose without being called away from my library to the office. My acceptance of a place provoked some of the leaders of opposition, with whom I had lived in habits of intimacy; and I was most unjustly accused of deserting a party in which I had never enlisted.

[17] The style would not be without elegance nor the logic without point.

The aspect of the next session of parliament was stormy and perilous; county meetings, petitions, and committees of correspondence, announced the public discontent; and instead of voting with a triumphant majority, the friends of government were often exposed to a struggle and sometimes to a defeat. The House of Commons adopted Mr. Dunning's motion, "That the influence of the Crown had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished:" and Mr. Burke's Bill of Reform was framed with skill, introduced with eloquence, and supported by numbers. Our late president, the American Secretary of State, very narrowly escaped the sentence of proscription; but the unfortunate Board of Trade was abolished in the committee by a small majority (207 to 199) of eight votes. The storm, however, blew over for a time; a large defection of country gentlemen eluded the sanguine hopes of the patriots; the Lords of Trade were revived; administration recovered their strength and spirit; and the flames of London, which were kindled by a mischievous madman, admonished all thinking men of the danger of an appeal to the people. In the premature dissolution which followed this session of parliament I lost my seat. Mr. Eliot was now deeply engaged in the measures of opposition, and the electors of Liskeard are commonly of the same opinion as Mr. Eliot.

In this interval of my senatorial life I published the second and third volumes of the *Decline and Fall.* My ecclesiastical history still breathed the same spirit of freedom; but Protestant zeal is more indifferent to the characters and controversies of the fourth and fifth centuries. My obstinate silence had damped the ardor of the polemics. Dr. Watson, the most candid of my adversaries, assured me that he had no thoughts of renewing the attack, and my impartial balance of the virtues and vices of Julian was generally praised. This truce was interrupted only by some animadversions of the Catholics of Italy, and by some angry letters from Mr. Travis, who made me personally responsible for condemning, with the best critics, the spurious text of the three heavenly witnesses.

I perceived, and without surprise, the coldness and even prejudice of the town; nor could a whisper escape my ear, that, in the judgment of many readers, my continuation was much inferior to the original attempts. An author who can-

not ascend will always appear to sink: envy was now prepared for my reception, and the zeal of my religious, was fortified by the motive of my political, enemies.

I was however encouraged by some domestic and foreign testimonies of applause; and the second and third volumes insensibly rose in sale and reputation to a level with the first. But the public is seldom wrong; and I am inclined to believe that, especially in the beginning, they are more prolix and less entertaining than the first; my efforts had not been relaxed by success, and I had rather deviated into the opposite fault of minute and superfluous diligence. On the Continent my name and writings were slowly diffused: a French translation of the first volume had disappointed the booksellers of Paris; and a passage in the third was construed as a personal reflection on the reigning monarch.

Before I could apply for a seat at the general election the list was already full; but Lord North's promise was sincere, his recommendation was effectual, and I was soon chosen on a vacancy for the borough of Lymington, in Hampshire. In the first session of the new parliament the administration stood their ground; their final overthrow was reserved for the second. The American war had once been the favorite of the country: the pride of England was irritated by the resistance of her colonies, and the executive power was driven by national clamor into the most vigorous and coercive measures. But the length of a fruitless contest, the loss of armies, the accumulation of debt and taxes, and the hostile confederacy of France, Spain, and Holland, indisposed the public to the American war, and the persons by whom it was conducted; the representatives of the people followed, at a slow distance, the changes of their opinion; and the ministers, who refused to bend, were broken by the tempest. As soon as Lord North had lost, or was about to lose, a majority in the House of Commons, he surrendered his office, and retired to a private station, with the tranquil assurance of a clear conscience and a cheerful temper: the old fabric was dissolved, and the posts of government were occupied by the victorious and veteran troops of opposition. The Lords of Trade were not immediately dismissed, but the board itself was abolished by Mr. Burke's bill, which decency had com-

pelled the patriots to revive; and I was stripped of a convenient salary, after having enjoyed it about three years.

So flexible is the title of my *History,* that the final era might be fixed at my own choice: and I long hesitated whether I should be content with the three volumes, the fall of the Western empire, which fulfilled my first engagement with the public. In this interval of suspense, nearly a twelvemonth, I returned by a natural impulse to the Greek authors of antiquity; I read with new pleasure the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey,* the Histories of Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon, a large portion of the tragic and comic theater of Athens, and many interesting dialogues of the Socratic school. Yet in the luxury of freedom I began to wish for the daily task, the active pursuit, which gave a value to every book, and an object to every inquiry: the preface of a new edition announced my design, and I dropped without reluctance from the age of Plato to that of Justinian. The original texts of Procopius and Agathias supplied the events and even the characters of his reign; but a laborious winter was devoted to the Codes, the Pandects, and the modern interpreters, before I presumed to form an abstract of the civil law. My skill was improved by practice, my diligence perhaps was quickened by the loss of office; and, excepting the last chapter, I had finished the fourth volume before I sought a retreat on the banks of the Leman Lake.

It is not the purpose of this narrative to expatiate on the public or secret history of the times: the schism which followed the death of the Marquis of Rockingham, the appointment of the Earl of Shelburne, the resignation of Mr. Fox, and his famous coalition with Lord North. But I may assert with some degree of assurance, that in their political conflict those great antagonists had never felt any personal animosity to each other, that their reconciliation was easy and sincere, and that their friendship has never been clouded by the shadow of suspicion or jealousy. The most violent or venal of their respective followers embraced this fair occasion of revolt, but their alliance still commanded a majority in the House of Commons; the peace was censured, Lord Shelburne resigned, and the two friends knelt on the same cushion to take the oath of Secretary of State. From a principle of

gratitude I adhered to the coalition; my vote was counted in the day of battle, but I was overlooked in the division of the spoil. There were many claimants more deserving and importunate than myself: the Board of Trade could not be restored; and, while the list of places was curtailed, the number of candidates was doubled. An easy dismission to a secure seat at the Board of Customs or Excise was promised on the first vacancy: but the chance was distant and doubtful; nor could I solicit with much ardor an ignoble servitude, which would have robbed me of the most valuable of my studious hours: at the same time the tumult of London, and the attendance on parliament, were grown more irksome; and, without some additional income, I could not long or prudently maintain the style of expense to which I was accustomed.

From my early acquaintance with Lausanne I had always cherished a secret wish that the school of my youth might become the retreat of my declining age. A moderate fortune would secure the blessings of ease, leisure, and independence: the country, the people, the manners, the language, were congenial to my taste; and I might indulge the hope of passing some years in the domestic society of a friend. After traveling with several English, Mr. Deyverdun was now settled at home, in a pleasant habitation, the gift of his deceased aunt: we had long been separated, we had long been silent; yet in my first letter I exposed, with the most perfect confidence, my situation, my sentiments, and my designs. His immediate answer was a warm and joyful acceptance; the picture of our future life provoked my impatience; and the terms of arrangement were short and simple, as he possessed the property, and I undertook the expense of our common house. Before I could break my English chain it was incumbent on me to struggle with the feelings of my heart, the indolence of my temper, and the opinion of the world, which unanimously condemned this voluntary banishment. In the disposal of my effects, the library, a sacred deposit, was alone excepted. As my post-chaise moved over Westminster Bridge I bade a long farewell to the "fumum et opes strepitumque Romæ."[18] My journey, by the direct road through France,

[18] "The smoke, and the wealth, and the street-noise of Rome."—Horace, *Odes*, B. III., xxix. 12.

was not attended with any accident, and I arrived at Lausanne nearly twenty years after my second departure. Within less than three months the coalition struck on some hidden rocks: had I remained on board I should have perished in the general shipwreck.

Since my establishment at Lausanne more than seven years have elapsed; and if every day has not been equally soft and serene, not a day, not a moment, has occurred in which I have repented of my choice. During my absence, a long portion of human life, many changes had happened: my elder acquaintance had left the stage; virgins were ripened into matrons, and children were grown to the age of manhood. But the same manners were transmitted from one generation to another: my friend alone was an inestimable treasure; my name was not totally forgotten, and all were ambitious to welcome the arrival of a stranger and the return of a fellow-citizen. The first winter was given to a general embrace, without any nice discrimination of persons and characters. After a more regular settlement, a more accurate survey, I discovered three solid and permanent benefits of my new situation. 1. My personal freedom had been somewhat impaired by the House of Commons and the Board of Trade; but I was now delivered from the chain of duty and dependence, from the hopes and fears of political adventure: my sober mind was no longer intoxicated by the fumes of party, and I rejoiced in my escape as often as I read of the midnight debates which preceded the dissolution of parliament. 2. My English economy had been that of a solitary bachelor, who might afford some occasional dinners. In Switzerland I enjoyed, at every meal, at every hour, the free and pleasant conversation of the friend of my youth; and my daily table was always provided for the reception of one or two extraordinary guests. Our importance in society is less a positive than a relative weight: in London I was lost in the crowd; I ranked with the first families of Lausanne, and my style of prudent expense enabled me to maintain a fair balance of reciprocal civilities. 3. Instead of a small house between a street and a stable-yard, I began to occupy a spacious and convenient mansion, connected on the north side with the city, and open on the south to a beautiful and

boundless horizon. A garden of four acres had been laid out by the taste of Mr. Deyverdun: from the garden a rich scenery of meadows and vineyards descends to the Leman Lake, and the prospect far beyond the lake is crowned by the stupendous mountains of Savoy. My books and my acquaintance had been first united in London; but this happy position of my library in town and country was finally reserved for Lausanne. Possessed of every comfort in this triple alliance, I could not be tempted to change my habitation with the changes of the seasons.

My friends had been kindly apprehensive that I should not be able to exist in a Swiss town at the foot of the Alps, after having so long conversed with the first men of the first cities of the world. Such lofty connections may attract the curious, and gratify the vain; but I am too modest, or too proud, to rate my own value by that of my associates; and, whatsoever may be the fame of learning or genius, experience has shown me that the cheaper qualifications of politeness and good sense are of more useful currency in the commerce of life. By many, conversation is esteemed as a theater or a school: but, after the morning has been occupied by the labors of the library, I wish to unbend rather than to exercise my mind; and in the interval between tea and supper I am far from disdaining the innocent amusement of a game at cards. Lausanne is peopled by a numerous gentry, whose companionable idleness is seldom disturbed by the pursuits of avarice or ambition: the women, though confined to a domestic education, are endowed for the most part with more taste and knowledge than their husbands and brothers: but the decent freedom of both sexes is equally remote from the extremes of simplicity and refinement. I shall add, as a misfortune rather than a merit, that the situation and beauty of the Pays de Vaud, the long habits of the English, the medical reputation of Dr. Tissot, and the fashion of viewing the mountains and glaciers, have opened us on all sides to the incursions of foreigners. The visits of Mr. and Madame Necker, of Prince Henry of Prussia, and of Mr. Fox, may form some pleasing exceptions; but, in general, Lausanne has appeared most agreeable in my eyes when we have been abandoned to our own society. I had frequently seen Mr.

Necker, in the summer of 1784, at a country house near Lausanne, where he composed his *Treatise on the Administration of the Finances.* I have since, in October 1790, visited him in his present residence, the castle and barony of Copet, near Geneva. Of the merits and measures of that statesman various opinions may be entertained; but all impartial men must agree in their esteem of his integrity and patriotism.

In the month of August 1784, Prince Henry of Prussia, on his way to Paris, passed three days at Lausanne. His military conduct has been praised by professional men; his character has been vilified by the wit and malice of a demon; but I was flattered by his affability, and entertained by his conversation.

In his tour to Switzerland (September 1788) Mr. Fox gave me two days of free and private society. He seemed to feel, and even to envy, the happiness of my situation; while I admired the powers of a superior man, as they are blended in his attractive character with the softness and simplicity of a child. Perhaps no human being was ever more perfectly exempt from the taint of malevolence, vanity, or falsehood.

My transmigration from London to Lausanne could not be effected without interrupting the course of my historical labors. The hurry of my departure, the joy of my arrival, the delay of my tools, suspended their progress; and a full twelvemonth was lost before I could resume the thread of regular and daily industry. A number of books most requisite and least common had been previously selected; the academical library of Lausanne, which I could use as my own, contained at least the fathers and councils; and I have derived some occasional succor from the public collections of Berne and Geneva. The fourth volume was soon terminated, by an abstract of the controversies of the Incarnation, which the learned Dr. Prideaux was apprehensive of exposing to profane eyes. It had been the original design of the learned Dean Prideaux to write the history of the ruin of the Eastern Church. In this work it would have been necessary not only to unravel all those controversies which the Christians made about the hypostatical union, but also to unfold all the niceties and subtle notions which each sect entertained concerning it. The pious historian was apprehensive of exposing

that incomprehensible mystery to the cavils and objections of unbelievers; and he durst not, "seeing the nature of this book, venture it abroad in so wanton and lewd an age."

In the fifth and sixth volumes the revolutions of the empire and the world are most rapid, various, and instructive; and the Greek or Roman historians are checked by the hostile narratives of the barbarians of the East and the West.

It was not till after many designs and many trials that I preferred, as I still prefer, the method of grouping my picture by nations; and the seeming neglect of chronological order is surely compensated by the superior merits of interest and perspicuity. The style of the first volume is, in my opinion, somewhat crude and elaborate; in the second and third it is ripened into ease, correctness, and numbers; but in the three last I may have been seduced by the facility of my pen, and the constant habit of speaking one language and writing another may have infused some mixture of Gallic idioms. Happily for my eyes, I have always closed my studies with the day, and commonly with the morning; and a long, but temperate, labor has been accomplished without fatiguing either the mind or body; but when I computed the remainder of my time and my task, it was apparent that, according to the season of publication, the delay of a month would be productive of that of a year. I was now straining for the goal, and in the last winter many evenings were borrowed from the social pleasures of Lausanne. I could now wish that a pause, an interval, had been allowed for a serious revisal.

I have presumed to mark the moment of conception: I shall now commemorate the hour of my final deliverance. It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page, in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen I took several turns in a *berceau*, or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on recovery of my freedom, and, perhaps, the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over

my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that, whatsoever might be the future date of my *History,* the life of the historian must be short and precarious. I will add two facts, which have seldom occurred in the composition of six, or at least of five, quartos. 1. My first rough manuscript, without any intermediate copy, has been sent to the press. 2. Not a sheet has been seen by any human eyes, excepting those of the author and the printer: the faults and the merits are exclusively my own.

I cannot help recollecting a much more extraordinary fact, which is affirmed of himself by Retif de la Bretonne, a voluminous and original writer of French novels. He labored, and may still labor, in the humble office of corrector to a printing-house; but this office enabled him to transport an entire volume from his mind to the press; and his work was given to the public without ever having been written by the pen.

After a quiet residence of four years, during which I had never moved ten miles from Lausanne, it was not without some reluctance and terror that I undertook, in a journey of two hundred leagues, to cross the mountains and the sea. Yet this formidable adventure was achieved without danger or fatigue; and at the end of a fortnight I found myself in Lord Sheffield's house and library, safe, happy, and at home. The character of my friend (Mr. Holroyd) had recommended him to a seat in parliament for Coventry, the command of a regiment of light dragoons, and an Irish peerage. The sense and spirit of his political writings have decided the public opinion on the great questions of our commercial interest with America and Ireland.

The sale of his *Observations on the American States* was diffusive, their effect beneficial; the Navigation Act, the palladium of Britain, was defended, and perhaps saved, by his pen; and he proves, by the weight of fact and argument, that the mother-country may survive and flourish after the loss of America. My friend has never cultivated the arts of composition; but his materials are copious and correct, and he leaves on his paper the clear impression of an active and vigorous mind. His *Observations on the Trade, Manufactures,*

*and Present State of Ireland* were intended to guide the industry, to correct the prejudices, and to assuage the passions of a country which seemed to forget that she could be free and prosperous only by a friendly connection with Great Britain. The concluding observations are written with so much ease and spirit that they may be read by those who are the least interested in the subject.

He fell (1784) with the unpopular coalition; but his merit has been acknowledged at the last general election, 1790, by the honorable invitation and free choice of the city of Bristol. During the whole time of my residence in England I was entertained at Sheffield Place and in Downing Street by his hospitable kindness; and the most pleasant period was that which I passed in the domestic society of the family. In the larger circle of the metropolis I observed the country and the inhabitants with the knowledge, and without the prejudices, of an Englishman; but I rejoiced in the apparent increase of wealth and prosperity, which might be fairly divided between the spirit of the nation and the wisdom of the minister. All party resentment was now lost in oblivion; since I was no man's rival, no man was my enemy. I felt the dignity of independence, and, as I asked no more, I was satisfied with the general civilities of the world. The house in London which I frequented with most pleasure and assiduity was that of Lord North. After the loss of power and of sight he was still happy in himself and his friends, and my public tribute of gratitude and esteem could no longer be suspected of any interested motive. Before my departure from England I was present at the august spectacle of Mr. Hastings's trial in Westminster Hall. It is not my province to absolve or condemn the Governor of India; but Mr. Sheridan's eloquence commanded my applause; nor could I hear without emotion the personal compliment which he paid me in the presence of the British nation.[19]

From this display of genius, which blazed four successive days, I shall stoop to a very mechanical circumstance. As

[19] He said the facts that made up the volume of narrative were unparalleled in atrociousness, and that nothing equal in criminality was to be traced, either in ancient or modern history, in the correct periods of Tacitus or the luminous page of Gibbon.—*Morning Chronicle,* June 14, 1788.

I was waiting in the manager's box I had the curiosity to inquire of the shorthand-writer how many words a ready and rapid orator might pronounce in an hour? From 7000 to 7500 was his answer. The medium of 7200 will afford 120 words in a minute, and two words in each second. But this computation will only apply to the English language.

As the publication of my three last volumes was the principal object, so it was the first care, of my English journey. The previous arrangements with the bookseller and the printer were settled in my passage through London, and the proofs which I returned more correct were transmitted every post from the press to Sheffield Place. The length of the operation, and the leisure of the country, allowed some time to review my manuscript. Several rare and useful books, the *Assises de Jerusalem, Ramusius de Bello C. P^aro^,* the Greek *Acts of the Synod of Florence,* the *Statuta Urbis Romæ,* etc., were procured, and I introduced in their proper places the supplements which they afforded. The impression of the fourth volume had consumed three months. Our common interest required that we should move with a quicker pace; and Mr. Strahan fulfilled his engagement, which few printers could sustain, of delivering every week three thousand copies of nine sheets. The day of publication was, however, delayed, that it might coincide with the fifty-first anniversary of my own birthday; the double festival was celebrated by a cheerful literary dinner at Mr. Cadell's house; and I seemed to blush while they read an elegant compliment from Mr. Hayley, whose poetical talents had more than once been employed in the praise of his friend. Before Mr. Hayley inscribed with my name his epistles on history I was not acquainted with that amiable man and elegant poet. He afterwards thanked me in verse for my second and third volumes. As most of the former purchasers were naturally desirous of completing their sets, the sale of the quarto edition was quick and easy; and an octavo size was printed to satisfy at a cheaper rate the public demand. The conclusion of my work was generally read, and variously judged. The style has been exposed to much academical criticism; a religious clamor was revived, and the reproach of indecency has been loudly echoed by the rigid censors of morals. I never could understand the clamor

that has been raised against the indecency of my three last volumes. 1. An equal degree of freedom in the former part, especially in the first volume, had passed without reproach. 2. I am justified in painting the manners of the times; the vices of Theodora form an essential feature in the reign and character of Justinian; and the most naked tale in my history is told by the Rev. Mr. Joseph Warton, an instructor of youth (*Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope,* p. 322-324). 3. My English text is chaste, and all licentious passages are left in the obscurity of a learned language. *Le Latin dans ses mots brave l'honnêteté,* says the correct Boileau, in a country and idiom more scrupulous than our own.[20] Yet, upon the whole, the *History of the Decline and Fall* seems to have struck root both at home and abroad, and may perhaps a hundred years hence still continue to be abused.

The French, Italian, and German translations have been executed with various success; but, instead of patronizing, I should willingly suppress such imperfect copies, which injure the character while they propagate the name of the author. The first volume had been feebly, though faithfully, translated into French by M. Le Clerc de Septchenes, a young gentleman of a studious character and liberal fortune. After his decease the work was continued by two manufacturers of Paris, MM. Desmuniers and Cantwell; but the former is now an active member of the National Assembly, and the undertaking languishes in the hands of his associate. The superior merit of the interpreter, or his language, inclines me to prefer the Italian version: but I wish that it were in my power to read the German, which is praised by the best judges. The Irish pirates are at once my friends and my enemies. But I cannot be displeased with the two numerous and correct impressions which have been published for the use of the Continent at Basil in Switzerland. The conquests of our language and literature are not confined to Europe alone, and a writer who succeeds in London is speedily read on the banks of the Delaware and the Ganges.

In the preface of the fourth volume, while I gloried in the name of an Englishman, I announced my approaching return to the neighborhood of the Lake of Lausanne. This last trial

[20] Latin by its terms puts modesty to the blush.

confirmed my assurance that I had wisely chosen for my own happiness; nor did I once in a year's visit entertain a wish of settling in my native country. Britain is the free and fortunate island; but where is the spot in which I could unite the comforts and beauties of my establishment at Lausanne? The tumult of London astonished my eyes and ears; the amusements of public places were no longer adequate to the trouble; the clubs and assemblies were filled with new faces and young men; and our best society, our long and late dinners, would soon have been prejudicial to my health. Without any share in the political wheel, I must be idle and insignificant: yet the most splendid temptations would not have enticed me to engage a second time in the servitude of parliament or office. At Tunbridge, some weeks after the publication of my *History,* I reluctantly quitted Lord and Lady Sheffield, and with a young Swiss friend, whom I had introduced to the English world, I pursued the road of Dover and Lausanne. My habitation was embellished in my absence; and the last division of books, which followed my steps, increased my chosen library to the number of between six and seven thousand volumes. My seraglio was ample, my choice was free, my appetite was keen. After a full repast on Homer and Aristophanes, I involved myself in the philosophic maze in the writings of Plato, of which the dramatic is, perhaps, more interesting than the argumentative part; but I stepped aside into every path of inquiry which reading or reflection accidentally opened.

Alas! the joy of my return, and my studious ardor, were soon damped by the melancholy state of my friend Mr. Deyverdun. His health and spirits had long suffered a gradual decline, a succession of apoplectic fits announced his dissolution, and, before he expired, those who loved him could not wish for the continuance of his life. The voice of reason might congratulate his deliverance, but the feelings of nature and friendship could be subdued only by time: his amiable character was still alive in my remembrance; each room, each walk was imprinted with our common footsteps; and I should blush at my own philosophy, if a long interval of study had not preceded and followed the death of my friend. By his last will he left to me the option of purchasing his house and

garden, or of possessing them during my life, on the payment either of a stipulated price, or of an easy retribution, to his kinsman and heir. I should probably have been tempted by the demon of property, if some legal difficulties had not been started against my title; a contest would have been vexatious, doubtful, and invidious; and the heir most gratefully subscribed an agreement, which rendered my life possession more perfect, and his future condition more advantageous. Yet I had often revolved the judicious lines in which Pope answers the objections of his long-sighted friend—

> Pity to build without or child or wife;
> Why, you'll enjoy it only all your life:
> Well, if the use be mine, does it concern one
> Whether the name belong to Pope or Vernon?

The certainty of my tenure has allowed me to lay out a considerable sum in improvements and alterations: they have been executed with skill and taste; and few men of letters, perhaps, in Europe, are so desirably lodged as myself. But I feel, and with the decline of years I shall more painfully feel, that I am alone in paradise. Among the circle of my acquaintance at Lausanne, I have gradually acquired the solid and tender friendship of a respectable family;[21] the four persons of whom it is composed are all endowed with the virtues best adapted to their age and situation; and I am encouraged to love the parents as a brother, and the children as a father. Every day we seek and find the opportunities of meeting: yet even this valuable connection cannot supply the loss of domestic society.

Within the last two or three years our tranquillity has been clouded by the disorders of France; many families at Lausanne were alarmed and affected by the terrors of an impending bankruptcy; but the revolution, or rather the dissolution, of the kingdom, has been heard and felt in the adjacent lands.

I beg leave to subscribe my assent to Mr. Burke's creed on the revolution of France. I admire his eloquence, I approve his politics, I adore his chivalry, and I can almost excuse his reverence for church establishments. I have sometimes

[21] The family of de Severy.

thought of writing a dialogue of the dead, in which Lucian, Erasmus, and Voltaire should mutually acknowledge the danger of exposing an old superstition to the contempt of the blind and fanatic multitude.

A swarm of emigrants of both sexes, who escaped from the public ruin, has been attracted by the vicinity, the manners, and the language of Lausanne; and our narrow habitations, in town and country, are now occupied by the first names and titles of the departed monarchy. These noble fugitives are entitled to our pity; they may claim our esteem, but they cannot, in their present state of mind and fortune, much contribute to our amusement. Instead of looking down as calm and idle spectators on the theater of Europe, our domestic harmony is somewhat embittered by the infusion of party spirit: our ladies and gentlemen assume the character of self-taught politicians; and the sober dictates of wisdom and experience are silenced by the clamor of the triumphant *democrates.* The fanatic missionaries of sedition have scattered the seeds of discontent in our cities and villages, which have flourished above two hundred and fifty years without fearing the approach of war or feeling the weight of government. Many individuals, and some communities, appear to be infected with the Gallic frenzy, the wild theories of equal and boundless freedom; but I trust that the body of the people will be faithful to their sovereign and to themselves; and I am satisfied that the failure or success of a revolt would equally terminate in the ruin of the country. While the aristocracy of Berne protects the happiness, it is superfluous to inquire whether it be founded in the rights of man: the economy of the state is liberally supplied without the aid of taxes; and the magistrates *must* reign with prudence and equity, since they are unarmed in the midst of an armed nation.

The revenue of Berne, excepting some small duties, is derived from church lands, tithes, feudal rights, and interest of money. The republic has nearly £500,000 sterling in the English funds, and the amount of their treasure is unknown to the citizens themselves. For myself (may the omen be averted!) I can only declare that the first stroke of a rebel drum would be the signal of my immediate departure.

When I contemplate the common lot of mortality, I must acknowledge that I have drawn a high prize in the lottery of life. The far greater part of the globe is overspread with barbarism or slavery; in the civilized world the most numerous class is condemned to ignorance and poverty; and the double fortune of my birth in a free and enlightened country, in an honorable and wealthy family, is the lucky chance of a unit against millions. The general probability is about three to one that a new-born infant will not live to complete his fiftieth year. I have now passed that age, and may fairly estimate the present value of my existence in the three-fold division of mind, body, and estate.

1. The first and indispensable requisite of happiness is a clear conscience, unsullied by the reproach or remembrance of an unworthy action.

> Hic murus aheneus esto,
> Nil conscire sibi, nullâ pallescere culpâ.[22]

I am endowed with a cheerful temper, a moderate sensibility, and a natural disposition to repose rather than to activity: some mischievous appetites and habits have perhaps been corrected by philosophy or time. The love of study, a passion which derives fresh vigor from enjoyment, supplies each day, each hour, with a perpetual source of independent and rational pleasure; and I am not sensible of any decay of the mental faculties. The original soil has been highly improved by cultivation; but it may be questioned whether some flowers of fancy, some grateful errors, have not been eradicated with the weeds of prejudice. 2. Since I have escaped from the long perils of my childhood, the serious advice of a physician has seldom been requisite. "The madness of superfluous health" I have never known, but my tender constitution has been fortified by time, and the inestimable gift of the sound and peaceful slumbers of infancy may be imputed both to the mind and body. 3. I have already described the merits of my society and situation; but these enjoyments would be tasteless or bitter if their possession

[22] "Let this be to thee as it were a brazen wall of defense, to be conscious of no evil that will cause you to grow pale in the presence of others."—Horace, *Epistles*, B. I., i. l. 59.

were not assured by an annual and adequate supply. According to the scale of Switzerland I am a rich man; and I am indeed rich, since my income is superior to my expense, and my expense is equal to my wishes. My friend Lord Sheffield has kindly relieved me from the cares to which my taste and temper are most adverse: shall I add that, since the failure of my first wishes, I have never entertained any serious thoughts of a matrimonial connection?

I am disgusted with the affectation of men of letters, who complain that they have renounced a substance for a shadow, and that their fame (which sometimes is no insupportable weight) affords a poor compensation for envy, censure, and persecution.[23] My own experience, at least, has taught me a very different lesson: twenty happy years have been animated by the labor of my *History*, and its success has given me a name, a rank, a character in the world to which I should not otherwise have been entitled. The freedom of my writings has indeed provoked an implacable tribe; but, as I was safe from the stings, I was soon accustomed to the buzzing of the hornets: my nerves are not tremblingly alive, and my literary temper is so happily framed that I am less sensible of pain than of pleasure. The rational pride of an author may be offended, rather than flattered, by vague indiscriminate praise; but he cannot, he should not, be indifferent to the fair testimonies of private and public esteem. Even his moral sympathy may be gratified by the idea that now, in the present hour, he is imparting some degree of amusement or knowledge to his friends in a distant land; that one day his mind will be familiar to the grandchildren of those who are yet unborn. I cannot boast of the friendship or favor of princes; the patronage of English literature has long since been devolved on our booksellers, and the measure of their liberality is the least ambiguous test of our common success. Perhaps the golden mediocrity of my fortune has contributed to fortify my application.

[23] Mr. d'Alembert relates that, as he was walking in the gardens of Sans Souci with the King of Prussia, Frederic said to him, "Do you see that old woman, a poor weeder, asleep on that sunny bank? she is probably a more happy being than either of us." The king and the philosopher may speak for themselves; for my part, I do not envy the old woman.

The present is a fleeting moment, the past is no more; and our prospect of futurity is dark and doubtful. This day may *possibly* be my last: but the laws of probability, so true in general, so fallacious in particular, still allow about fifteen years. I shall soon enter into the period which, as the most agreeable of his long life, was selected by the judgment and experience of the sage Fontenelle. His choice is approved by the eloquent historian of nature, who fixes our moral happiness to the mature season, in which our passions are supposed to be calmed, our duties fulfilled, our ambition satisfied, our fame and fortune established on a solid basis. In private conversation, that great and amiable man added the weight of his own experience; and this autumnal felicity might be exemplified in the lives of Voltaire, Hume, and many other men of letters. I am far more inclined to embrace than to dispute this comfortable doctrine. I will not suppose any premature decay of the mind or body; but I must reluctantly observe that two causes, the abbreviation of time, and the failure of hope, will always tinge with a browner shade the evening of life.

END OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Declaration
of
Independence

# THOMAS JEFFERSON

## THE FOUNDER OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

## 1743-1826

### (INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

We have here a picture of Thomas Jefferson sitting down at the close of his long and tremendously useful life to point out to his descendants which among his splendid deeds he himself regarded as having been of most value to mankind. This picture is one of the most impressive in American history. Jefferson was second only to Washington in his services to the cause of American Independence; he became the Secretary of State to the first President, and then resigned to head the opposition against what he regarded as the too aristocratic inclinations of Washington. Jefferson thus became the founder and chief leader of the Democratic Party in the United States. His enemies called him a demagogue, accused him of merely pretending to trust in the combined wisdom of the masses so as to secure their support for his political career. But few readers of his profoundly thoughtful, earnestly democratic writings will accept this superficial view. His autobiography in particular shows him from the very beginning of his public career a resolute seeker after justice, an enthusiastic believer in universal brotherhood, and yet withal a man of such calm and all pervading common-sense as we might wish to find more frequently among his antagonists.

His autobiography deals chiefly with his public deeds; his private life he scorned either to explain or to defend. He was, like his great leader Washington, a Virginian of the wealthy landed gentry, of Welsh ancestry on his father's side, but on his mother's a descendant of the noted English colonial family of the Randolphs. To them he partly owed his early prominence.

It is deeply to be regretted that increasing age led him to abandon his autobiography when the narrative had only reached the year 1790. The richest part of his great career was still to follow, and we thus remain without his own analysis of his greatest triumphs. Yet what we possess is in itself invaluable; no man of his times saw more of the world or saw with keener eyes than Jefferson. His analysis of the opening days and deeds of the French Revolution should be known to every reader. He watched the outbreak as the Minister of the United States in France,

as an American profoundly grateful for French assistance in 1778, and as the foremost democrat of the world, eagerly hopeful for the future of mankind's experiments in self-government; keenly, watchfully observant of every blunder.

He himself asked to have inscribed upon his tombstone "Here lies buried Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of American Independence, and of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom, and Father of the University of Virginia." Could there be a prouder or more broad-minded record?

## AUTOBIOGRAPHY

JANUARY 6, 1821. At the age of 77, I begin to make some memoranda, and state some recollections of dates and facts concerning myself, for my own more ready reference, and for the information of my family.

The tradition in my father's family was, that their ancestor came to this country from Wales, and from near the mountain of Snowdon, the highest in Great Britain. I noted once a case from Wales, in the law reports, where a person of our name was either plaintiff or defendant; and one of the same name was secretary to the Virginia Company. These are the only instances in which I have met with the name in that country. I have found it in our early records; but the first particular information I have of any ancestor was of my grandfather, who lived at the place in Chesterfield called Ozborne's, and owned the lands afterwards the glebe of the parish. He had three sons: Thomas, who died young; Field, who settled on the waters of Roanoke and left numerous descendants; and Peter, my father, who settled on the lands I still own, called Shadwell, adjoining my present residence. He was born February 29, 1707-8, and intermarried, 1739, with Jane Randolph, of the age of 19, daughter of Isham Randolph, one of the seven sons of that name and family, settled at Dungeoness in Goochland. They trace their pedigree far back in England and Scotland, to which let every one ascribe the faith and merit he chooses.

My father's education had been quite neglected; but being of a strong mind, sound judgment, and eager after information, he read much and improved himself, insomuch that he was chosen, with Joshua Fry, Professor of Mathematics in

William and Mary college, to continue the boundary line between Virginia and North Carolina, which had been begun by Colonel Byrd; and was afterwards employed with the same Mr. Fry, to make the first map of Virginia which had ever been made, that of Captain Smith being merely a conjectural sketch. They possessed excellent materials for so much of the country as is below the blue ridge; little being then known beyond that ridge. He was the third or fourth settler, about the year 1737, of the part of the country in which I live. He died, August 17th, 1757, leaving my mother a widow, who lived till 1776, with six daughters and two sons, myself the elder. To my younger brother he left his estate on James River, called Snowdon, after the supposed birth-place of the family; to myself, the lands on which I was born and live.

He placed me at the English school at five years of age; and at the Latin at nine, where I continued until his death. My teacher, Mr. Douglas, a clergyman from Scotland, with the rudiments of the Latin and Greek languages, taught me the French; and on the death of my father, I went to the Reverend Mr. Maury, a correct classical scholar, with whom I continued two years; and then, to wit, in the spring of 1760, went to William and Mary college, where I continued two years. It was my great good fortune, and what probably fixed the destinies of my life, that Dr. William Small of Scotland was then professor of mathematics, a man profound in most of the useful branches of science, with a happy talent of communication, correct and gentlemanly manners, and an enlarged and liberal mind. He, most happily for me, became soon attached to me, and made me his daily companion when not engaged in the school; and from his conversation I got my first views of the expansion of science, and of the system of things in which we are placed. Fortunately, the philosophical chair became vacant soon after my arrival at college, and he was appointed to fill it *per interim;* and he was the first who ever gave, in that college, regular lectures in Ethics, Rhetoric, and Belles lettres. He returned to Europe in 1762, having previously filled up the measure of his goodness to me, by procuring for me, from his most intimate friend, George Wythe, a reception as a student of law, under his direction, and introduced me to the acquaintance and familiar table of

Governor Fauquier, the ablest man who had ever filled that office. With him, and at his table, Dr. Small and Mr. Wythe, his *amici omnium horarum,* and myself, formed a *partie quarree,* and to the habitual conversations on these occasions I owed much instruction. Mr. Wythe continued to be my faithful and beloved mentor in youth, and my most affectionate friend through life. In 1767, he led me into the practice of the law at the bar of the General court, at which I continued until the Revolution shut up the courts of justice.

In 1769, I became a member of the legislature by the choice of the county in which I live, and so continued until it was closed by the Revolution. I made one effort in that body for the permission of the emancipation of slaves, which was rejected; and indeed, during the regal government, nothing liberal could expect success. Our minds were circumscribed within narrow limits, by an habitual belief that it was our duty to be subordinate to the mother country in all matters of government, to direct all our labors in subservience to her interests, and even to observe a bigoted intolerance for all religions but hers. The difficulties with our representatives were of habit and despair, not of reflection and conviction. Experience soon proved that they could bring their minds to rights, on the first summons of their attention. But the King's Council, which acted as another house of legislature, held their places at will, and were in most humble obedience to that will. The Governor too, who had a negative on our laws, held by the same tenure, and with still greater devotedness to it; and, last of all, the Royal negative closed the last door to every hope of amelioration.

On the 1st of January, 1772, I was married to Martha Skelton, widow of Bathurst Skelton, and daughter of John Wayles, then twenty-three years old. Mr. Wayles was a lawyer of much practice, to which he was introduced more by his great industry, punctuality, and practical readiness, than by eminence in the science of his profession. He was a most agreeable companion, full of pleasantry and good humor, and welcomed in every society. He acquired a handsome fortune, and died in May, 1773, leaving three daughters. The portion which came on that event to Mrs. Jefferson, after the debts should be paid, which were very considerable, was about equal

to my own patrimony, and consequently doubled the ease of our circumstances.

When the famous Resolutions of 1765, against the Stamp-act, were proposed, I was yet a student of law in Williamsburgh. I attended the debate, however, at the door of the lobby of the House of Burgesses, and heard the splendid display of Mr. Henry's talents as a popular orator. They were great indeed; such as I have never heard from any other man. He appeared to me to speak as Homer wrote. Mr. Johnson, a lawyer, and member from the Northern Neck, seconded the resolutions, and by him the learning and the logic of the case were chiefly maintained. My recollections of these transactions may be seen, page 60 of the life of Patrick Henry, by Wirt, to whom I furnished them.

In May, 1769, a meeting of the General Assembly was called by the Governor, Lord Botetourt. I had then become a member; and to that meeting became known the joint resolutions and address of the Lords and Commons, of 1768-9, on the proceedings in Massachusetts. Counter-resolutions, and an address to the King by the House of Burgesses, were agreed to with little opposition, and a spirit manifestly displayed itself of considering the cause of Massachusetts as a common one. The Governor dissolved us; but we met the next day in the Apollo [1] of the Raleigh tavern, formed ourselves into a voluntary convention, drew up articles of association against the use of any merchandise imported from Great Britain, signed and recommended them to the people, repaired to our several counties, and were reëlected without any other exception than of the very few who had declined assent to our proceedings.

Nothing of particular excitement occurring for a considerable time, our countrymen seemed to fall into a state of insensibility to our situation; the duty on tea, not yet repealed, and the declaratory act of a right in the British Parliament to bind us by their laws in all cases whatsoever, still suspended over us. But a court of inquiry held in Rhode Island in 1762, with a power to send persons to England to be tried for offenses committed here, was considered, at our session of the spring of 1773, as demanding attention. Not thinking

[1] The name of a public room in the Raleigh.

our old and leading members up to the point of forwardness and zeal which the times required, Mr. Henry, Richard Henry Lee, Francis L. Lee, Mr. Carr, and myself agreed to meet in the evening, in a private room of the Raleigh, to consult on the state of things. There may have been a member or two more whom I do not recollect. We were all sensible that the most urgent of all measures was that of coming to an understanding with all the other colonies, to consider the British claims as a common cause to all, and to produce a unity of action; and, for this purpose, that a committee of correspondence in each colony would be the best instrument for intercommunication; and that their first measure would probably be to propose a meeting of deputies from every colony, at some central place, who should be charged with the direction of the measures which should be taken by all. We, therefore, drew up the resolutions which may be seen in Wirt, page 87. The consulting members proposed to me to move them, but I urged that it should be done by Mr. Carr, my friend and brother-in-law, then a new member, to whom I wished an opportunity should be given of making known to the house his great worth and talents. It was so agreed; he moved them, they were agreed to *nem. con.*, and a committee of correspondence appointed, of whom Peyton Randolph, the speaker, was chairman. The Governor (then Lord Dunmore) dissolved us, but the committee met the next day, prepared a circular letter to the speakers of the other colonies, inclosing to each a copy of the resolutions, and left it in charge with their chairman to forward them by expresses.

The origination of these committees of correspondence between the colonies has been since claimed for Massachusetts; and Marshall has given into this error, although the very note of his appendix to which he refers, shows that their establishment was confined to their own towns. This matter will be seen clearly stated in a letter of Samuel Adams Wells to me of April 2, 1819, and my answer of May 12th. I was corrected by the letter of Mr. Wells in the information I had given Mr. Wirt, as stated in his note, page 87, that the messengers of Massachusetts and Virginia crossed each other on the way, bearing similar propositions; for Mr. Wells shows that Massachusetts did not adopt the measure, but, on the

receipt of our proposition, delivered at their next session. Their message, therefore, which passed ours, must have related to something else, for I well remember Peyton Randolph's informing me of the crossing of our messengers.

The next event which excited our sympathies for Massachusetts was the Boston port bill, by which that port was to be shut up on the 1st of June, 1774. This arrived while we were in session in the spring of that year. The lead in the House, on these subjects, being no longer left to the old members, Mr. Henry, R. H. Lee, Fr. L. Lee, three or four other members, whom I do not recollect, and myself, agreeing that we must boldly take an unequivocal stand in the line with Massachusetts, determined to meet and consult on the proper measures, in the council-chamber, for the benefit of the library in that room. We were under conviction of the necessity of arousing our people from the lethargy into which they had fallen, as to passing events; and thought that the appointment of a day of general fasting and prayer would be most likely to call up and alarm their attention. No example of such a solemnity had existed since the days of our distresses in the war of '55, since which a new generation had grown up. With the help, therefore, of Rushworth, whom we rummaged over for the revolutionary precedents and forms of the Puritans of that day, preserved by him, we cooked up a resolution, somewhat modernizing their phrases, for appointing the 1st day of June, on which the port-bill was to commence, for a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer, to implore Heaven to avert from us the evils of civil war, to inspire us with firmness in support of our rights, and to turn the hearts of both the King and Parliament to moderation and justice.

To give greater emphasis to our proposition, we agreed to wait the next morning on Mr. Nicholas, whose grave and religious character was more in unison with the tone of our resolution, and to solicit him to move it. We accordingly went to him in the morning. He moved it the same day; the 1st of June was proposed; and it passed without opposition. The Governor dissolved us, as usual. We retired to the Apollo, as before, agreed to an association, and instructed the committee of correspondence to propose to the corresponding

committees of the other colonies, to appoint deputies to meet in Congress at such place, *annually*, as should be convenient, to direct, from time to time, the measures required by the general interest; and we declared that an attack on any one colony, should be considered as an attack on the whole. This was in May. We further recommended to the several counties to elect deputies to meet at Williamsburg, the 1st of August ensuing, to consider the state of the colony, and particularly to appoint delegates to a general congress, should that measure be acceded to by the committees of correspondence generally. It was acceded to; Philadelphia was appointed for the place, and the 5th of September for the time of meeting. We returned home, and in our several counties invited the clergy to meet assemblies of the people on the 1st of June, to perform the ceremonies of the day, and to address to them discourses suited to the occasion. The people met generally, with anxiety and alarm in their countenances, and the effect of the day, through the whole colony, was like a shock of electricity, arousing every man, and placing him erect and solidly on his center. They chose, universally, delegates for the convention.

Being elected for my own county, I prepared a draft of instructions to be given to the delegates whom we should send to the Congress, which I meant to propose at our meeting. In this I took the ground that, from the beginning, I had thought the only one orthodox or tenable, which was, that the relation between Great Britain and these colonies was exactly the same as that of England and Scotland, after the accession of James, and until the union, and the same as her present relations with Hanover, having the same executive chief, but no other necessary political connection; and that our emigration from England to this country gave her no more rights over us, than the emigrations of the Danes and Saxons gave to the present authorities of the mother country, over England. In this doctrine, however, I had never been able to get any one to agree with me but Mr. Wythe. He concurred in it from the first dawn of the question, What was the political relation between us and England? Our other patriots, Randolph, the Lees, Nicholas, Pendleton, stopped at the half-way house of John Dickinson, who ad-

mitted that England had a right to regulate our commerce, and to lay duties on it for the purposes of regulation, but not of raising revenue. But for this ground there was no foundation in compact, in any acknowledged principles of colonization, nor in reason: expatriation being a natural right, and acted on as such, by all nations, in all ages.

I set out for Williamsburg some days before that appointed for our meeting, but was taken ill of a dysentery on the road, and was unable to proceed. I sent on, therefore, to Williamsburg, two copies of my draft, the one under cover to Peyton Randolph, who I knew would be in the chair of the convention, the other to Patrick Henry. Whether Mr. Henry disapproved the ground taken, or was too lazy to read it (for he was the laziest man in reading I ever knew) I never learned; but he communicated it to nobody. Peyton Randolph informed the convention he had received such a paper from a member, prevented by sickness from offering it in his place, and he laid it on the table for perusal. It was read generally by the members, approved by many, though thought too bold for the present state of things; but they printed it in pamphlet form, under the title of "A Summary View of the Rights of British America." It found its way to England, was taken up by the opposition, interpolated a little by Mr. Burke so as to make it answer opposition purposes, and in that form ran rapidly through several editions. This information I had from Parson Hurt, who happened at the time to be in London, whither he had gone to receive clerical orders; and I was informed afterwards by Peyton Randolph, that it had procured me the honor of having my name inserted in a long list of proscriptions, enrolled in a bill of attainder commenced in one of the Houses of Parliament, but suppressed in embryo by the hasty step of events, which warned them to be a little cautious. Montague, agent of the House of Burgesses in England, made extracts from the bill, copied the names, and sent them to Peyton Randolph. The names, I think, were about twenty, which he repeated to me, but I recollect those only of Hancock, the two Adamses, Peyton Randolph himself, Patrick Henry, and myself. The convention met on the 1st of August, renewed their association, appointed delegates to the Congress, gave them instructions

very temperately and properly expressed, both as to style and matter; and they repaired to Philadelphia at the time appointed. The splendid proceedings of that Congress, at their first session, belong to general history, are known to every one, and need not therefore be noted here. They terminated their session on the 26th of October, to meet again on the 10th of May ensuing.

The convention, at their ensuing session of March, '75, approved of the proceedings of Congress, thanked their delegates, and reappointed the same persons to represent the colony at the meeting to be held in May; and foreseeing the probability that Peyton Randolph, their president, and speaker also of the House of Burgesses, might be called off, they added me, in that event, to the delegation. Mr. Randolph was, according to expectation, obliged to leave the chair of Congress, to attend the General Assembly summoned by Lord Dunmore, to meet on the 1st day of June, 1775. Lord North's conciliatory propositions, as they were called, had been received by the Governor, and furnished the subject for which this assembly was convened. Mr. Randolph accordingly attended, and the tenor of these propositions being generally known, as having been addressed to all the governors, he was anxious that the answer of our Assembly, likely to be the first, should harmonize with what he knew to be the sentiments and wishes of the body he had recently left. He feared that Mr. Nicholas, whose mind was not yet up to the mark of the times, would undertake the answer, and therefore pressed me to prepare it. I did so, and, with his aid, carried it through the House, with long and doubtful scruples from Mr. Nicholas and James Mercer, and a dash of cold water on it here and there, enfeebling it somewhat, but finally with unanimity, or a vote approaching it. This being passed, I repaired immediately to Philadelphia, and conveyed to Congress the first notice they had of it. It was entirely approved there. I took my seat with them on the 21st of June. On the 24th, a committee which had been appointed to prepare a declaration of the causes of taking up arms, brought in their report (drawn I believe by J. Rutledge) which, not being liked, the House recommitted it, on the 26th, and added Mr. Dickinson and myself to the committee.

On the rising of the House, the committee having not yet met, I happened to find myself near Governor W. Livingston, and proposed to him to draw the paper. He excused himself and proposed that I should draw it. On my pressing him with urgency, "We are as yet but new acquaintances, sir," said he, "why are you so earnest for my doing it?" "Because," said I, "I have been informed that you drew the Address to the people of Great Britain, a production, certainly, of the finest pen in America." "On that," says he, "perhaps, sir, you may not have been correctly informed." I had received the information in Virginia from Colonel Harrison on his return from that Congress. Lee, Livingston, and Jay had been the committee for that draft. The first, prepared by Lee, had been disapproved and recommitted. The second was drawn by Jay, but being presented by Governor Livingston, had led Colonel Harrison into the error. The next morning, walking in the hall of Congress, many members being assembled, but the House not yet formed, I observed Mr. Jay speaking to R. H. Lee, and leading him by the button of his coat to me. "I understand, sir," said he to me, "that this gentleman informed you that Governor Livingston drew the Address to the people of Great Britain." I assured him, at once, that I had not received that information from Mr. Lee, and that not a word had ever passed on the subject between Mr. Lee and myself; and after some explanations the subject was dropped. These gentlemen had had some sparrings in debate before, and continued ever very hostile to each other.

I prepared a draft of the declaration committed to us. It was too strong for Mr. Dickinson. He still retained the hope of reconciliation with the mother country, and was unwilling it should be lessened by offensive statements. He was so honest a man, and so able a one, that he was greatly indulged even by those who could not feel his scruples. We therefore requested him to take the paper, and put it into a form he could approve. He did so, preparing an entire new statement, and preserving of the former only the last four paragraphs and half of the preceding one. We approved and reported it to Congress, who accepted it. Congress gave a signal proof of their indulgence to Mr. Dickinson, and of their great desire not to go too fast for any respectable part

of our body, in permitting him to draw their second petition to the King according to his own ideas, and passing it with scarcely any amendment. The disgust against this humility was general; and Mr. Dickinson's delight at its passage was the only circumstance which reconciled them to it. The vote being passed, although further observation on it was out of order, he could not refrain from rising and expressing his satisfaction, and concluded by saying, "There is but one word, Mr. President, in the paper which I disapprove, and that is the word *Congress;*" on which Ben Harrison rose and said, "There is but one word in the paper, Mr. President, of which I approve, and that is the word *Congress.*"

On the 22d of July, Dr. Franklin, Mr. Adams, R. H. Lee, and myself, were appointed a committee to consider and report on Lord North's conciliatory resolution. The answer of the Virginia Assembly on that subject having been approved, I was requested by the committee to prepare this report, which will account for the similarity of feature in the two instruments.

On the 15th of May, 1776, the convention of Virginia instructed their delegates in Congress, to propose to that body to declare the colonies independent of Great Britain, and appointed a committee to prepare a declaration of rights and plan of government.

In Congress, Friday, June 7, 1776. The delegates from Virginia moved, in obedience to instructions from their constituents, that the Congress should declare that these United colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; that measures should be immediately taken for procuring the assistance of foreign powers, and a Confederation be formed to bind the colonies more closely together.

The House being obliged to attend at that time to some other business, the proposition was referred to the next day, when the members were ordered to attend punctually at ten o'clock.

Saturday, June 8. They proceeded to take it into consideration, and referred it to a committee of the whole, into

which they immediately resolved themselves, and passed that day and Monday, the 10th, in debating on the subject.

It was argued by Wilson, Robert R. Livingston, E. Rutledge, Dickinson, and others:

That, though they were friends to the measures themselves, and saw the impossibility that we should ever again be united with Great Britain, yet they were against adopting them at this time:

That the conduct we had formerly observed was wise and proper now, of deferring to take any capital step till the voice of the people drove us into it:

That they were our power, and without them our declarations could not be carried into effect:

That the people of the middle colonies (Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, the Jerseys and New York) were not yet ripe for bidding adieu to British connection, but that they were fast ripening, and, in a short time, would join in the general voice of America:

That the resolution, entered into by this House on the 15th of May, for suppressing the exercise of all powers derived from the crown, had shown, by the ferment into which it had thrown these middle colonies, that they had not yet accommodated their minds to a separation from the mother country:

That some of them had expressly forbidden their delegates to consent to such a declaration, and others had given no instructions, and consequently no powers to give such consent:

That if the delegates of any particular colony had no power to declare such colony independent, certain they were, the others could not declare it for them; the colonies being as yet perfectly independent of each other:

That the assembly of Pennsylvania was now sitting above stairs, their convention would sit within a few days, the convention of New York was now sitting, and those of the Jerseys and Delaware counties would meet on the Monday following, and it was probable these bodies would take up the question of Independence, and would declare to their delegates the voice of their state:

That if such a declaration should now be agreed to, these delegates must retire, and possibly their colonies might secede from the Union:

That such a secession would weaken us more than could be compensated by any foreign alliance:

That in the event of such a division, foreign powers would either refuse to join themselves to our fortunes, or, having us so much in their power as that desperate declaration would place us, they would insist on terms proportionably more hard and prejudicial:

That we had little reason to expect an alliance with those to whom alone, as yet, we had cast our eyes:

That France and Spain had reason to be jealous of that rising power, which would one day certainly strip them of all their American possessions:

That it was more likely they should form a connection with the British court, who, if they should find themselves unable otherwise to extricate themselves from their difficulties, would agree to a partition of our territories, restoring Canada to France, and the Floridas to Spain, to accomplish for themselves a recovery of these colonies:

That it would not be long before we should receive certain information of the disposition and feelings of the French court, from the agent whom he had sent to Paris for that purpose:

That if this disposition should be favorable, by waiting the event of the present campaign, which we all hoped would be successful, we should have reason to expect an alliance on better terms:

That this would in fact work no delay of any effectual aid from such ally, as, from the advance of the season and distance of our situation, it was impossible we could receive any assistance during this campaign:

That it was prudent to fix among ourselves the terms on which we should form alliance, before we declared we would form one at all events:

And that if these were agreed on, and our Declaration of Independence ready by the time our Ambassador should be prepared to sail, it would be as well as to go into that Declaration at this day.

On the other side, it was urged by J. Adams, Lee, Wythe, and others, that no gentleman had argued against the policy or the right of separation from Britain, nor had supposed it

possible we should ever renew our connection; that they had only opposed its being now declared:

That the question was not whether, by a Declaration of Independence, we should make ourselves what we are not; but whether we should declare a fact which already exists:

That, as to the people or parliament of England, we had always been independent of them, their restraints on our trade deriving efficacy from our acquiescence only, and not from any rights they possessed of imposing them, and that so far, our connection had been federal only, and was now dissolved by the commencement of hostilities:

That, as to the King, we had been bound to him by allegiance, but that this bond was now dissolved by his assent to the last act of Parliament, by which he declares us out of his protection, and by his levying war on us, a fact which had long ago proved us out of his protection; it being a certain position in law, that allegiance and protection are reciprocal, the one ceasing when the other is withdrawn:

That James the II. never declared the people of England out of his protection, yet his actions proved it, and the Parliament declared it:

No delegates then can be denied, or ever want, a power of declaring an existing truth:

That the delegates from the Delaware counties having declared their constituents ready to join, there are only two colonies, Pennsylvania and Maryland, whose delegates are absolutely tied up, and that these had, by their instructions, only reserved a right of confirming or rejecting the measure:

That the instructions from Pennsylvania might be accounted for from the times in which they were drawn, near a twelvemonth ago, since which the face of affairs has totally changed:

That within that time, it had become apparent that Britain was determined to accept nothing less than a *carte-blanche*, and that the King's answer to the Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Common Council of London, which had come to hand four days ago, must have satisfied every one of this point:

That the people wait for us to lead the way:

That *they* are in favor of the measure, though the instructions given by some of their *representatives* are not:

That the voice of the representatives is not always consonant with the voice of the people, and that this is remarkably the case in these middle colonies:

That the effect of the resolution of the 15th of May has proved this, which, raising the murmurs of some in the colonies of Pennsylvania and Maryland, called forth the opposing voice of the freer part of the people, and proved them to be the majority even in these colonies:

That the backwardness of these two colonies might be ascribed, partly to the influence of proprietary power and connections, and partly, to their having not yet been attacked by the enemy:

That these causes were not likely to be soon removed, as there seemed no probability that the enemy would make either of these the seat of this summer's war:

That it would be vain to wait either weeks or months for perfect unanimity, since it was impossible that all men should ever become of one sentiment on any question:

That the conduct of some colonies, from the beginning of this contest, had given reason to suspect it was their settled policy to keep in the rear of the confederacy, that their particular prospect might be better, even in the worst event:

That, therefore, it was necessary for those colonies who had thrown themselves forward and hazarded all from the beginning, to come forward now also, and put all again to their own hazard:

That the history of the Dutch Revolution, in which three states only confederated at first, proved that a secession of some colonies would not be so dangerous as some apprehended:

That a declaration of Independence alone could render it consistent with European delicacy, for European powers to treat with us, or even to receive an Ambassador from us:

That till this, they would not receive our vessels into their ports, nor acknowledge the adjudications of our courts of admiralty to be legitimate, in cases of capture of British vessels:

That though France and Spain may be jealous of our rising power, they must think it will be much more formidable with the addition of Great Britain; and will therefore see it their interest to prevent a coalition; but should they refuse, we

shall be but where we are; whereas without trying, we shall never know whether they will aid us or not:

That the present campaign may be unsuccessful, and therefore we had better propose an alliance while our affairs wear a hopeful aspect:

That to wait the event of this campaign will certainly work delay, because, during the summer, France may assist us effectually, by cutting off those supplies of provisions from England and Ireland, on which the enemy's armies here are to depend; or by setting in motion the great power they have collected in the West Indies, and calling our enemy to the defense of the possessions they have there:

That it would be idle to lose time in settling the terms of alliance, till we had first determined we would enter into alliance:

That it is necessary to lose no time in opening a trade for our people, who will want clothes, and will want money too, for the payment of taxes:

And that the only misfortune is, that we did not enter into alliance with France six months sooner, as, besides opening her ports for the vent of our last year's produce, she might have marched an army into Germany, and prevented the petty princes there from selling their unhappy subjects to subdue us.

It appearing in the course of these debates that the colonies of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and South Carolina were not yet matured for falling from the parent stem, but that they were fast advancing to that state, it was thought most prudent to wait a while for them, and to postpone the final decision to July 1st; but, that this might occasion as little delay as possible, a committee was appointed to prepare a Declaration of Independence. The committee were John Adams, Dr. Franklin, Roger Sherman, Robert R. Livingston, and myself. Committees were also appointed, at the same time, to prepare a plan of confederation for the colonies, and to state the terms proper to be proposed for foreign alliance. The committee for drawing the Declaration of Independence desired me to do it. It was accordingly done, and being approved by them, I reported it to the House on Friday, the 28th of June, when it was read, and ordered

to lie on the table. On Monday, the 1st of July, the House resolved itself into a committee of the whole, and resumed the consideration of the original motion made by the delegates of Virginia, which, being again debated through the day, was carried in the affirmative by the votes of New Hampshire, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina and Georgia. South Carolina and Pennsylvania voted against it. Delaware had but two members present, and they were divided. The delegates from New York declared they were for it themselves, and were assured their constituents were for it; but that their instructions having been drawn near a twelvemonth before, when reconciliation was still the general object, they were enjoined by them to do nothing which should impede that object. They, therefore, thought themselves not justifiable in voting on either side, and asked leave to withdraw from the question; which was given them. The committee rose and reported their resolution to the House. Mr. Edward Rutledge, of South Carolina, then requested the determination might be put off to the next day, as he believed his colleagues, though they disapproved of the resolution, would then join in it for the sake of unanimity. The ultimate question, whether the House would agree to the resolution of the committee, was accordingly postponed to the next day, when it was again moved, and South Carolina concurred in voting for it. In the meantime, a third member had come post from the Delaware counties, and turned the vote of that colony in favor of the resolution. Members of a different sentiment attending that morning from Pennsylvania also, her vote was changed, so that the whole twelve colonies who were authorized to vote at all, gave their voices for it; and, within a few days,[2] the convention of New York approved of it, and thus supplied the void occasioned by the withdrawing of her delegates from the vote.

Congress proceeded the same day to consider the Declaration of Independence, which had been reported and lain on the table the Friday preceding, and on Monday referred to a committee of the whole. The pusillanimous idea that we had friends in England worth keeping terms with still haunted

[2] July 9.

the minds of many. For this reason, those passages which conveyed censures on the people of England were struck out, lest they should give them offense. The clause, too, reprobating the enslaving the inhabitants of Africa, was struck out in complaisance to South Carolina and Georgia, who had never attempted to restrain the importation of slaves, and who, on the contrary, still wished to continue it. Our northern brethren also, I believe, felt a little tender under those censures; for though their people had very few slaves themselves, yet they had been pretty considerable carriers of them to others. The debates, having taken up the greater parts of the second, third, and fourth days of July, were, on the evening of the last, closed; the Declaration was reported by the committee, agreed to by the House, and signed by every member present, except Mr. Dickinson.

Our delegation had been renewed for the ensuing year, commencing August 11; but the new government was now organized, a meeting of the legislature was to be held in October, and I had been elected a member by my county. I knew that our legislation, under the regal government, had many very vicious points which urgently required reformation, and I thought I could be of more use in forwarding that work. I therefore retired from my seat in Congress on the 2d of September, resigned it, and took my place in the legislature of my State, on the 7th of October.

On the 11th, I moved for leave to bring in a bill for the establishment of courts of justice, the organization of which was of importance. I drew the bill; it was approved by the committee, reported and passed, after going through its due course.

On the 12th, I obtained leave to bring in a bill declaring tenants in tail to hold their lands in fee simple. In the earlier times of the colony, when lands were to be obtained for little or nothing, some provident individuals procured large grants; and, desirous of founding great families for themselves, settled them on their descendants in fee tail. The transmission of this property from generation to generation, in the same name, raised up a distinct set of families, who, being privileged by law in the perpetuation of their wealth, were thus formed into a Patrician order, distinguished by the splendor

and luxury of their establishments. From this order, too, the king habitually selected his counselors of State; the hope of which distinction devoted the whole corps to the interests and will of the crown. To annul this privilege, and instead of an aristocracy of wealth, of more harm and danger, than benefit, to society, to make an opening for the aristocracy of virtue and talent, which nature has wisely provided for the direction of the interests of society, and scattered with equal hand through all its conditions, was deemed essential to a well-ordered republic.—To effect it, no violence was necessary, no deprivation of natural right, but rather an enlargement of it by a repeal of the law. For this would authorize the present holder to divide the property among his children equally, as his affections were divided; and would place them, by natural generation, on the level of their fellow citizens. But this repeal was strongly opposed by Mr. Pendleton, who was zealously attached to ancient establishments; and who, taken all in all, was the ablest man in debate I have ever met with. He had not indeed the poetical fancy of Mr. Henry, his sublime imagination, his lofty and overwhelming diction; but he was cool, smooth and persuasive; his language flowing, chaste and embellished; his conceptions quick, acute and full of resource; never vanquished: for if he lost the main battle, he returned upon you, and regained so much of it as to make it a drawn one, by dexterous maneuvers, skirmishes in detail, and the recovery of small advantages which, little singly, were important all together. You never knew when you were clear of him, but were harassed by his perseverance, until the patience was worn down of all who had less of it than himself. Add to this, that he was one of the most virtuous and benevolent of men, the kindest friend, the most amiable and pleasant of companions, which insured a favorable reception to whatever came from him. Finding that the general principle of entails could not be maintained, he took his stand on an amendment which he proposed, instead of an absolute abolition, to permit the tenant in tail to convey in fee simple, if he chose it; and he was within a few votes of saving so much of the old law. But the bill passed finally for entire abolition.

In that one of the bills for organizing our judiciary system,

which proposed a court of Chancery, I had provided for a trial by jury of all matters of fact, in that as well as in the courts of law. He defeated it by the introduction of four words only, "*if either party choose.*" The consequence has been, that as no suitor will say to his judge, "Sir, I distrust you, give me a jury," juries are rarely, I might say, perhaps, never, seen in that court, but when called for by the Chancellor of his own accord.

The first establishment in Virginia which became permanent, was made in 1607. I have found no mention of negroes in the colony until about 1650. The first brought here as slaves were by a Dutch ship; after which the English commenced the trade, and continued it until the revolutionary war. That suspended, *ipso facto,* their further importation for the present, and the business of the war pressing constantly on the legislature, this subject was not acted on finally until the year '78, when I brought in a bill to prevent their further importation. This passed without opposition, and stopped the increase of the evil by importation, leaving to future efforts its final eradication.

The first settlers of this colony were Englishmen, loyal subjects to their king and church, and the grant to Sir Walter Raleigh contained an express proviso that their laws "should not be against the true Christian faith, now professed in the church of England." As soon as the state of the colony admitted, it was divided into parishes, in each of which was established a minister of the Anglican church, endowed with a fixed salary, in tobacco, a glebe house and land with the other necessary appendages. To meet these expenses, all the inhabitants of the parishes were assessed, whether they were or not, members of the established church. Towards Quakers who came here, they were most cruelly intolerant, driving them from the colony by the severest penalties. In process of time, however, other sectarisms were introduced, chiefly of the Presbyterian family; and the established clergy, secure for life in their glebes and salaries, adding to these, generally, the emoluments of a classical school, found employment enough, in their farms and school-rooms, for the rest of the week, and devoted Sunday only to the edification of their flock, by service, and a sermon at their parish church. Their

other pastoral functions were little attended to. Against this inactivity, the zeal and industry of sectarian preachers had an open and undisputed field; and by the time of the revolution, a majority of the inhabitants had become dissenters from the established church, but were still obliged to pay contributions to support the pastors of the minority. This unrighteous compulsion, to maintain teachers of what they deemed religious errors, was grievously felt during the regal government, and without a hope of relief. But the first republican legislature, which met in '76, was crowded with petitions to abolish this spiritual tyranny. These brought on the severest contests in which I have ever been engaged. Our great opponents were Mr. Pendleton and Robert Carter Nicholas; honest men, but zealous churchmen.

The petitions were referred to the committee of the whole house on the state of the country; and, after desperate contests in that committee, almost daily from the 11th of October to the 5th of December, we prevailed so far only, as to repeal the laws which rendered criminal the maintenance of any religious opinions, the forbearance of repairing to church, or the exercise of any mode of worship; and further, to exempt dissenters from contributions to the support of the established church; and to suspend, only until the next session, levies on the members of that church for the salaries of their own incumbents. For although the majority of our citizens were dissenters, as has been observed, a majority of the legislature were churchmen. Among these, however, were some reasonable and liberal men, who enabled us, on some points, to obtain feeble majorities. But our opponents carried, in the general resolutions of the committee of November 19, a declaration that religious assemblies ought to be regulated, and that provision ought to be made for continuing the succession of the clergy, and superintending their conduct. And, in the bill now passed, was inserted an express reservation of the question, Whether a general assessment should not be established by law, on every one, to the support of the pastor of his choice; or whether all should be left to voluntary contributions; and on this question, debated at every session, from '76 to '79, (some of our dissenting allies, having now secured their particular object, going over to the advocates

of a general assessment,) we could only obtain a suspension from session to session until '79, when the question against a general assessment was finally carried, and the establishment of the Anglican church entirely put down. In justice to the two honest but zealous opponents who have been named, I must add, that although, from their natural temperaments, they were more disposed generally to acquiesce in things as they are, than to risk innovations, yet whenever the public will had once decided, none were more faithful or exact in their obedience to it.

The seat of our government had originally been fixed in the peninsula of Jamestown, the first settlement of the colonists; and had been afterwards removed a few miles inland to Williamsburg. But this was at a time when our settlements had not extended beyond the tide waters. Now they had crossed the Alleghany; and the center of population was very far removed from what it had been. Yet Williamsburg was still the depository of our archives, the habitual residence of the Governor and many other of the public functionaries, the established place for the sessions of the legislature, and the magazine of our military stores; and its situation was so exposed that it might be taken at any time in war, and, at this time particularly, an enemy might in the night run up either of the rivers, between which it lies, land a force above, and take possession of the place, without the possibility of saving either persons or things. I had proposed its removal so early as October, '76; but it did not prevail until the session of May, '79.

Early in the session of May, '79, I prepared, and obtained leave to bring in a bill, declaring who should be deemed citizens, asserting the natural right of expatriation, and prescribing the mode of exercising it. This, when I withdrew from the house, on the 1st of June following, I left in the hands of George Mason, and it was passed on the 26th of that month.

In giving this account of the laws of which I was myself the mover and draftsman, I, by no means, mean to claim to myself the merit of obtaining their passage. I had many occasional and strenuous coadjutors in debate, and one, most steadfast, able and zealous; who was himself a host. This

was George Mason, a man of the first order of wisdom among those who acted on the theater of the revolution, of expansive mind, profound judgment, cogent in argument, learned in the lore of our former constitution, and earnest for the republican change on democratic principles. His elocution was neither flowing nor smooth; but his language was strong, his manner most impressive, and strengthened by a dash of biting cynicism, when provocation made it seasonable.

Mr. Wythe, while speaker in the two sessions of 1777, between his return from Congress and his appointment to the Chancery, was an able and constant associate in whatever was before a committee of the whole. His pure integrity, judgment and reasoning powers, gave him great weight. Of him, see more in some notes inclosed in my letter of August 31, 1821, to Mr. John Saunderson.

Mr. Madison came into the House in 1776, a new member and young; which circumstances, concurring with his extreme modesty, prevented his venturing himself in debate before his removal to the Council of State, in November, '77. From thence he went to Congress, then consisting of few members. Trained in these successive schools, he acquired a habit of self-possession, which placed at ready command the rich resources of his luminous and discriminating mind, and of his extensive information, and rendered him the first of every assembly afterwards, of which he became a member. Never wandering from his subject into vain declamation, but pursuing it closely, in language pure, classical and copious, soothing always the feelings of his adversaries by civilities and softness of expression, he rose to the eminent station which he held in the great National Convention of 1787; and in that of Virginia which followed, he sustained the new constitution in all its parts, bearing off the palm against the logic of George Mason, and the fervid declamation of Mr. Henry. With these consummate powers, were united a pure and spotless virtue, which no calumny has ever attempted to sully. Of the powers and polish of his pen, and of the wisdom of his administration in the highest office of the nation, I need say nothing. They have spoken, and will forever speak for themselves.

So far we were proceeding in the details of reformation

only; selecting points of legislation, prominent in character and principle, urgent, and indicative of the strength of the general pulse of reformation. When I left Congress, in '76, it was in the persuasion that our whole code must be reviewed, adapted to our republican form of government; and, now that we had no negatives of Councils, Governors, and Kings to restrain us from doing right, that it should be corrected, in all its parts, with a single eye to reason, and the good of those for whose government it was framed. Early, therefore, in the session of '76, to which I returned, I moved and presented a bill for the revision of the laws, which was passed on the 24th of October; and on the 5th of November, Mr. Pendleton, Mr. Wythe, George Mason, Thomas L. Lee, and myself, were appointed a committee to execute the work.

We agreed to meet at Fredericksburg to settle the plan of operation, and to distribute the work. We met there accordingly, on the 13th of January, 1777. The first question was, whether we should propose to abolish the whole existing system of laws, and prepare a new and complete Institute, or preserve the general system, and only modify it to the present state of things. Mr. Pendleton, contrary to his usual disposition in favor of ancient things, was for the former proposition, in which he was joined by Mr. Lee. To this it was objected, that to abrogate our whole system would be a bold measure, and probably far beyond the views of the legislature; that they had been in the practice of revising, from time to time, the laws of the colony, omitting the expired, the repealed, and the obsolete, amending only those retained, and probably meant we should now do the same, only including the British statutes as well as our own: that to compose a new Institute, like those of Justinian and Bracton, or that of Blackstone, which was the model proposed by Mr. Pendleton, would be an arduous undertaking, of vast research, of great consideration and judgment; and when reduced to a text, every word of that text, from the imperfection of human language, and its incompetence to express distinctly every shade of idea, would become a subject of question and chicanery, until settled by repeated adjudications; and this would involve us for ages in litigation, and render property uncertain, until, like the statutes of old, every word had been

tried and settled by numerous decisions, and by new volumes of reports and commentaries; and that no one of us, probably, would undertake such a work, which to be systematical, must be the work of one hand. This last was the opinion of Mr. Wythe, Mr. Mason, and myself. When we proceeded to the distribution of the work, Mr. Mason excused himself, as, being no lawyer, he felt himself unqualified for the work, and he resigned soon after. Mr. Lee excused himself on the same ground, and died, indeed, in a short time. The other two gentlemen, therefore, and myself divided the work among us. The common law and statutes to the 4 James I. (when our separate legislature was established) were assigned to me; the British statutes, from that period to the present day, to Mr. Wythe; and the Virginia laws to Mr. Pendleton.

As the law of Descents, and the criminal law fell of course within my portion, I wished the committee to settle the leading principles of these, as a guide for me in framing them; and, with respect to the first, I proposed to abolish the law of primogeniture, and to make real estate descendible in parcenary to the next of kin, as personal property is, by the statute of distribution Mr. Pendleton wished to preserve the right of primogeniture, but seeing at once that that could not prevail, he proposed we should adopt the Hebrew principle, and give a double portion to the elder son. I observed, that if the eldest son could eat twice as much, or do double work, it might be a natural evidence of his right to a double portion; but being on a par in his powers and wants, with his brothers and sisters, he should be on a par also in the partition of the patrimony; and such was the decision of the other members.

On the subject of the Criminal law, all were agreed, that the punishment of death should be abolished, except for treason and murder; and that, for other felonies, should be substituted hard labor in the public works, and in some cases, the *Lex talionis*. How this last revolting principle came to obtain our approbation, I do not remember. There remained, indeed, in our laws, a vestige of it in a single case of a slave; it was the English law, in the time of the Anglo-Saxons, copied probably from the Hebrew law of "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," and it was the law of several ancient people; but the modern mind had left it far in the rear of its

advances. These points, however, being settled, we repaired to our respective homes for the preparation of the work.

In the execution of my part, I thought it material not to vary the diction of the ancient statutes by modernizing it, nor to give rise to new questions by new expressions. The text of these statutes had been so fully explained and defined, by numerous adjudications, as scarcely ever now to produce a question in our courts. I thought it would be useful, also, in all new drafts, to reform the style of the later British statutes, and of our own acts of Assembly; which, from their verbosity, their endless tautologies, their involutions of case within case, and parenthesis within parenthesis, and their multiplied efforts at certainty, by *saids* and *aforesaids*, by *ors* and by *ands*, to make them more plain, are really rendered more perplexed and incomprehensible, not only to common readers, but to the lawyers themselves. We were employed in this work from that time to February, 1779, when we met at Williamsburg, that is to say, Mr. Pendleton, Mr. Wythe and myself; and meeting day by day, we examined critically our several parts, sentence by sentence, scrutinizing and amending, until we had agreed on the whole.

We then returned home, had fair copies made of our several parts, which were reported to the General Assembly, June 18, 1779, by Mr. Wythe and myself, Mr. Pendleton's residence being distant, and he having authorized us by letter to declare his approbation. We had, in this work, brought so much of the Common law as it was thought necessary to alter, all the British statutes from *Magna Charta* to the present day, and all the laws of Virginia, from the establishment of our legislature, in the 4th Jac. 1. to the present time, which we thought should be retained, within the compass of one hundred and twenty-six bills, making a printed folio of ninety pages only. Some bills were taken out, occasionally, from time to time, and passed; but the main body of the work was not entered on by the legislature until after the general peace, in 1785, when, by the unwearied exertions of Mr. Madison, in opposition to the endless quibbles, chicaneries, perversions, vexations and delays of lawyers and demi-lawyers, most of the bills were passed by the legislature, with little alteration.

The bill for establishing religious freedom, the principles of

which had, to a certain degree, been enacted before, I had drawn in all the latitude of reason and right. It still met with opposition; but, with some mutilations in the preamble, it was finally passed; and a singular proposition proved that its protection of opinion was meant to be universal. Where the preamble declares, that coercion is a departure from the plan of the holy author of our religion, an amendment was proposed, by inserting the word "Jesus Christ," so that it should read, "a departure from the plan of Jesus Christ, the holy author of our religion;" the insertion was rejected by a great majority, in proof that they meant to comprehend, within the mantle of its protection, the Jew and the Gentile, the Christian and Mahometan, the Hindoo, and Infidel of every denomination.

Beccaria, and other writers on crimes and punishments, had satisfied the reasonable world of the unrightfulness and inefficacy of the punishment of crimes by death; and hard labor on roads, canals and other public works, had been suggested as a proper substitute. The Revisers had adopted these opinions; but the general idea of our country had not yet advanced to that point. The bill, therefore, for proportioning crimes and punishments, was lost in the House of Delegates by a majority of a single vote. I learned afterwards, that the substitute of hard labor in public, was tried (I believe it was in Pennsylvania) without success. Exhibited as a public spectacle, with shaved heads and mean clothing, working on the high roads, produced in the criminals such a prostration of character, such an abandonment of self-respect, as, instead of reforming, plunged them into the most desperate and hardened depravity of morals and character. To pursue the subject of this law.—I was written to in 1785 (being then in Paris) by directors appointed to superintend the building of a Capitol in Richmond, to advise them as to a plan, and to add to it one of a Prison. Thinking it a favorable opportunity of introducing into the State an example of architecture, in the classic style of antiquity, and the Maison quarrée of Nismes, an ancient Roman temple, being considered as the most perfect model existing of what may be called Cubic architecture, I applied to M. Clerissault, who had published drawings of the Antiquities of Nismes, to have me a

model of the building made in stucco, only changing the order from Corinthian to Ionic, on account of the difficulty of the Corinthian capitals. I yielded, with reluctance, to the taste of Clerissault, in his preference of the modern capital of Scamozzi to the more noble capital of antiquity. This was executed by the artist whom Choiseul Gouffier had carried with him to Constantinople, and employed, while Ambassador there, in making those beautiful models of the remains of Grecian architecture which are to be seen at Paris. To adapt the exterior to our use, I drew a plan for the interior, with the apartments necessary for legislative, executive, and judiciary purposes; and accommodated in their size and distribution to the form and dimensions of the building. These were forwarded to the Directors, in 1786, and were carried into execution, with some variations, not for the better, the most important of which, however, admit of future correction and amendment.

With respect to the plan of a Prison, requested at the same time, I had heard of a benevolent society, in England, which had been indulged by the government, in an experiment of the effect of labor, in *solitary confinement*, on some of their criminals; which experiment had succeeded beyond expectation. The same idea had been suggested in France, and an Architect of Lyons had proposed a plan of a well-contrived edifice, on the principle of solitary confinement. I procured a copy, and as it was too large for our purposes, I drew one on a scale less extensive, but susceptible of additions as they should be wanting. This I sent to the Directors, instead of a plan of a common prison, in the hope that it would suggest the idea of labor in solitary confinement, instead of that on the public works, which we had adopted in our Revised Code. Its principle, accordingly, but not its exact form, was adopted by Latrobe in carrying the plan into execution, by the erection of what is now called the Penitentiary, built under his direction. In the meanwhile, the public opinion was ripening, by time, by reflection, and by the example of Pennsylvania, where labor on the highways had been tried, without approbation, from 1786 to '89, and had been followed by their Penitentiary system on the principle of confinement and labor, which was proceeding auspiciously. In 1796, our legislature

resumed the subject, and passed the law for amending the Penal laws of the commonwealth.

On the 1st of June, 1779, I was appointed Governor of the Commonwealth, and retired from the legislature. Being elected, also, one of the Visitors of William and Mary College, a self-electing body, I effected, during my residence in Williamsburg that year, a change in the organization of that institution, by abolishing the Grammar school, and the two professorships of Divinity and Oriental languages, and substituting a professorship of Law and Police, one of Anatomy, Medicine and Chemistry, and one of Modern languages; and the charter confining us to six professorships, we added the Law of Nature and Nations, and the Fine Arts to the duties of the Moral professor, and Natural History to those of the professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy.

Being now, as it were, identified with the Commonwealth itself, to write my own history, during the two years of my administration, would be to write the public history of that portion of the revolution within this State. This has been done by others, and particularly by Mr. Girardin, who wrote his Continuation of Burke's History of Virginia, while at Milton, in this neighborhood, had free access to all my papers while composing it, and has given as faithful an account as I could myself. For this portion, therefore, of my own life, I refer altogether to his history. From a belief that, under the pressure of the invasion under which we were then laboring, the public would have more confidence in a Military chief, and that the Military commander, being invested with the Civil power also, both might be wielded with more energy, promptitude and effect for the defense of the State, I resigned the administration at the end of my second year, and General Nelson was appointed to succeed me.

Soon after my leaving Congress, in September, '76, to wit, on the last day of that month, I had been appointed, with Dr. Franklin, to go to France, as a Commissioner, to negotiate treaties of alliance and commerce with that government. Silas Deane, then in France, acting as [3] agent for procuring

[3] His ostensible character was to be that of a merchant, his real one that of agent for military supplies, and also for sounding the dispositions of the government of France, and seeing how far they would favor

military stores, was joined with us in commission. But such was the state of my family that I could not leave it, nor could I expose it to the dangers of the sea, and of capture by the British ships, then covering the ocean. I saw, too, that the laboring oar was really at home, where much was to be done, of the most permanent interest, in new modeling our governments, and much to defend our fanes and fire-sides from the desolations of an invading enemy, pressing on our country in every point. I declined, therefore, and Dr. Lee was appointed in my place. On the 15th of June, 1781, I had been appointed, with Mr. Adams, Dr. Franklin, Mr. Jay, and Mr. Laurens, a Minister Plenipotentiary for negotiating peace, then expected to be effected through the mediation of the Empress of Russia. The same reasons obliged me still to decline; and the negotiation was in fact never entered on. But, in the autumn of the next year, 1782, Congress receiving assurances that a general peace would be concluded in the winter and spring, they renewed my appointment on the 13th of November of that year. I had, two months before that, lost the cherished companion of my life, in whose affections, unabated on both sides, I had lived the last ten years in unchequered happiness. With the public interests, the state of my mind concurred in recommending the change of scene proposed; and I accepted the appointment, and left Monticello on the 19th of December, 1782, for Philadelphia, where I arrived on the 27th. The Minister of France, Luzerne, offered me a passage in the Romulus frigate, which I accepted; but she was then lying a few miles below Baltimore, blocked up in the ice. I remained, therefore, a month in Philadelphia, looking over the papers in the office of State, in order to possess myself of the general state of our foreign relations, and then went to Baltimore, to await the liberation of the frigate from the ice. After waiting there nearly a month, we received information that a Provisional treaty of peace had been signed by our Commissioners on the 3d of September, 1782, to become absolute, on the conclusion of peace between France and Great Britain. Considering my proceeding to Europe as now of no utility

us, either secretly or openly. His appointment had been by the Committee of foreign correspondence, March, 1776.

to the public, I returned immediately to Philadelphia, to take the orders of Congress, and was excused by them from further proceeding. I, therefore, returned home, where I arrived on the 15th of May, 1783.

On the 6th of the following month, I was appointed by the legislature a delegate to Congress, the appointment to take place on the 1st of November ensuing, when that of the existing delegation would expire. I, accordingly, left home on the 16th of October, arrived at Trenton, where Congress was sitting, on the 3d of November, and took my seat on the 4th, on which day Congress adjourned, to meet at Annapolis on the 26th.

Congress had now become a very small body, and the members very remiss in their attendance on its duties, insomuch, that a majority of the States, necessary by the Confederation to constitute a House even for minor business, did not assemble until the 13th of December.

They, as early as January 7, 1782, had turned their attention to the moneys current in the several States, and had directed the Financier, Robert Morris, to report to them a table of rates, at which the foreign coins should be received at the treasury. That officer, or rather his assistant, Gouverneur Morris, answered them on the 15th, in an able and elaborate statement of the denominations of money current in the several States, and of the comparative value of the foreign coins chiefly in circulation with us. He went into the consideration of the necessity of establishing a standard of value with us, and of the adoption of a money Unit. He proposed for that Unit, such a fraction of pure silver as would be a common measure of the penny of every State, without leaving a fraction. This common divisor he found to be 1-1440 of a dollar, or 1-1600 of the crown sterling. The value of a dollar was, therefore, to be expressed by 1,440 units, and of a crown by 1,600; each Unit containing a quarter of a grain of fine silver. Congress turning again their attention to this subject the following year, the Financier, by a letter of April 30, 1783, further explained and urged the Unit he had proposed; but nothing more was done on it until the ensuing year, when it was again taken up, and referred to a committee, of which I was a member. The

general views of the Financier were sound, and the principle was ingenious on which he proposed to found his Unit; but it was too minute for ordinary use, too laborious for computation, either by the head or in figures. The price of a loaf of bread, 1-20 of a dollar, would be 72 units.

A pound of butter, 1-5 of a dollar, 288 units.

A horse or bullock, of eighty dollars' value, would require a notation of six figures, to wit, 115,200, and the public debt, suppose of eighty millions, would require twelve figures, to wit, 115,200,000,000 units. Such a system of money-arithmetic would be entirely unmanageable for the common purposes of society. I proposed, therefore, instead of this, to adopt the Dollar as our Unit of account and payment, and that its divisions and sub-divisions should be in the decimal ratio. I wrote some Notes on the subject, which I submitted to the consideration of the Financier. I received his answer and adherence to his general system, only agreeing to take for his Unit one hundred of those he first proposed, so that a Dollar should be 14 40-100, and a crown 16 units. I replied to this, and printed my notes and reply on a flying sheet, which I put into the hands of the members of Congress for consideration, and the Committee agreed to report on my principle. This was adopted the ensuing year, and is the system which now prevails. I insert, here, the Notes and Reply, as showing the different views on which the adoption of our money system hung. The divisions into dimes, cents, and mills is now so well understood, that it would be easy of introduction into the kindred branches of weights and measures. I use, when I travel, an Odometer of Clarke's invention, which divides the mile into cents, and I find every one comprehends a distance readily, when stated to him in miles and cents; so he would in feet and cents, pounds and cents, &c.

The remissness of Congress, and their permanent session, began to be a subject of uneasiness; and even some of the legislatures had recommended to them intermissions, and periodical sessions. As the Confederation had made no provision for a visible head of the government, during vacations of Congress, and such a one was necessary to superintend the executive business, to receive and communicate with for-

eign ministers and nations, and to assemble Congress on sudden and extraordinary emergencies, I proposed, early in April, the appointment of a committee, to be called the "Committee of the States," to consist of a member from each State, who should remain in session during the recess of Congress: that the functions of Congress should be divided into executive and legislative, the latter to be reserved, and the former, by a general resolution, to be delegated to that Committee. This proposition was afterwards agreed to; a Committee appointed, who entered on duty on the subsequent adjournment of Congress, quarreled very soon, split into two parties. abandoned their post, and left the government without any visible head, until the next meeting in Congress. We have since seen the same thing take place in the Directory of France; and I believe it will forever take place in any Executive consisting of a plurality. Our plan, best, I believe, combines wisdom and practicability, by providing a plurality of Counselors, but a single Arbiter for ultimate decision.

I was in France when we heard of this schism, and separation of our Committee, and, speaking with Dr. Franklin of this singular disposition of men to quarrel, and divide into parties, he gave his sentiments, as usual, by way of Apologue. He mentioned the Eddystone lighthouse, in the British channel, as being built on a rock, in the mid-channel, totally inaccessible in winter, from the boisterous character of that sea, in that season; that, therefore, for the two keepers employed to keep up the lights, all provisions for the winter were necessarily carried to them in autumn, as they could never be visited again till the return of the milder season; that, on the first practicable day in the spring, a boat put off to them with fresh supplies. The boatmen met at the door one of the keepers, and accosted him with a "How goes it, friend?" "Very well." "How is your companion?" "I do not know." "Don't know? Is not he here?" "I can't tell." "Have not you seen him to-day?" "No." "When did you see him?" "Not since last fall." "You have killed him?" "Not I, indeed." They were about to lay hold of him, as having certainly murdered his companion; but he desired them to go up stairs and examine for themselves. They went up, and there found the other keeper.

They had quarreled, it seems, soon after being left there, had divided into two parties, assigned the cares below to one, and those above to the other, and had never spoken to, or seen, one another since.

But to return to our Congress at Annapolis. The definitive treaty of peace which had been signed at Paris on the 3d of September, 1783, and received here, could not be ratified without a House of nine States. On the 23d of December, therefore, we addressed letters to the several Governors, stating the receipt of the definitive treaty; that seven States only were in attendance, while nine were necessary to its ratification; and urging them to press on their delegates the necessity of their immediate attendance. And on the 26th, to save time, I moved that the Agent of Marine (Robert Morris) should be instructed to have ready a vessel at this place, at New York, and at some Eastern port, to carry over the ratification of the treaty when agreed to. It met the general sense of the House, but was opposed by Dr. Lee, on the ground of expense, which it would authorize the Agent to incur for us; and, he said, it would be better to ratify at once, and send on the ratification. Some members had before suggested, that seven States were competent to the ratification.

My motion was therefore postponed, and another brought forward by Mr. Read, of South Carolina, for an immediate ratification. This was debated the 26th and 27th. Read, Lee, Williamson and Jeremiah Chase, urged that ratification was a mere matter of form, that the treaty was conclusive from the moment it was signed by the ministers; that, although the Confederation requires the assent of *nine States* to *enter into* a treaty, yet, that its conclusion could not be called *entrance into it;* that supposing nine States requisite, it would be in the power of five States to keep us always at war; that nine States had virtually authorized the ratification, having ratified the provisional treaty, and instructed their ministers to agree to a definitive one in the same terms, and the present one was, in fact, substantially, and almost verbatim, the same; that there now remain but sixty-seven days for the ratification, for its passage across the Atlantic, and its exchange; that there was no hope of our soon having

nine States present; in fact, that this was the ultimate point of time to which we could venture to wait; that if the ratification was not in Paris by the time stipulated, the treaty would become void; that if ratified by seven States, it would go under our seal, without its being known to Great Britain that only seven had concurred; that it was a question of which they had no right to take cognizance, and we were only answerable for it to our constituents; that it was like the ratification which Great Britain had received from the Dutch, by the negotiations of Sir William Temple.

On the contrary, it was argued by Monroe, Gerry, Howel, Ellery and myself, that by the modern usage of Europe, the ratification was considered as the act which gave validity to a treaty, until which, it was not obligatory. That the commission to the ministers reserved the ratification to Congress; that the treaty itself stipulated that it should be ratified; that it became a second question, who were competent to the ratification? That the Confederation expressly required nine States to enter into any treaty; that, by this, that instrument must have intended, that the assent of nine States should be necessary, as well to the *completion* as to the *commencement* of the treaty, its object having been to guard the rights of the Union in all those important cases where nine States are called for; that by the contrary construction, seven States, containing less than one-third of our whole citizens, might rivet on us a treaty, commenced indeed under commission and instructions from nine States, but formed by the minister in express contradiction to such instructions, and in direct sacrifice of the interests of so great a majority; that the definitive treaty was admitted not to be a verbal copy of the provisional one, and whether the departures from it were of substance, or not, was a question on which nine States alone were competent to decide; that the circumstances of the ratification of the provisional articles by nine States, the instructions to our ministers to form a definitive one by them, and their actual agreement in substance, do not render us competent to ratify in the present instance; if these circumstances are in themselves a ratification, nothing further is requisite than to give attested copies of them, in exchange for the British ratification; if they are not, we remain where we

were, without a ratification by nine States, and incompetent ourselves to ratify; that it was but four days since the seven States, now present, unanimously concurred in a resolution, to be forwarded to the Governors of the absent States, in which they stated, as a cause for urging on their delegates, that nine States were necessary to ratify the treaty; that in the case of the Dutch ratification, Great Britain had courted it, and therefore was glad to accept it as it was; that they knew our Constitution, and would object to a ratification by seven; that, if that circumstance was kept back, it would be known hereafter, and would give them ground to deny the validity of a ratification, into which they should have been surprised and cheated, and it would be a dishonorable prostitution of our seal; that there is a hope of nine States; that if the treaty would become null, if not ratified in time, it would not be saved by an imperfect ratification; but that, in fact, it would not be null, and would be placed on better ground, going in unexceptionable form, though a few days too late, and rested on the small importance of this circumstance, and the physical impossibilities which had prevented a punctual compliance in point of time; that this would be approved by all nations, and by Great Britain herself, if not determined to renew the war, and if so determined, she would never want excuses, were this out of the way. Mr. Read gave notice, he should call for the yeas and nays; whereon those in opposition, prepared a resolution, expressing pointedly the reasons of their dissent from his motion. It appearing, however, that his proposition could not be carried, it was thought better to make no entry at all. Massachusetts alone would have been for it; Rhode Island, Pennsylvania and Virginia against it, Delaware, Maryland and North Carolina, would have been divided.

Our body was little numerous, but very contentious. Day after day was wasted on the most unimportant questions. A member, one of those afflicted with the morbid rage of debate, of an ardent mind, prompt imagination, and copious flow of words, who heard with impatience any logic which was not his own, sitting near me on some occasion of a trifling but wordy debate, asked me how I could sit in silence, hearing so much false reasoning, which a word should refute. I ob-

served to him, that to refute indeed was easy, but to silence was impossible; that in measures brought forward by myself, I took the laboring oar, as was incumbent on me; but that in general, I was willing to listen; that if every sound argument or objection was used by some one or other of the numerous debaters, it was enough; if not, I thought it sufficient to suggest the omission, without going into a repetition of what had been already said by others: that this was a waste and abuse of the time and patience of the House, which could not be justified. And I believe, that if the members of deliberate bodies were to observe this course generally, they would do in a day, what takes them a week; and it is really more questionable, than may at first be thought, whether Bonaparte's dumb legislature, which said nothing, and did much, may not be preferable to one which talks much, and does nothing.

I served with General Washington in the legislature of Virginia, before the revolution, and, during it, with Dr. Franklin in Congress. I never heard either of them speak ten minutes at a time, nor to any but the main point, which was to decide the question. They laid their shoulders to the great points, knowing that the little ones would follow of themselves. If the present Congress errs in too much talking, how can it be otherwise, in a body to which the people send one hundred and fifty lawyers, whose trade it is to question everything, yield nothing, and talk by the hour? That one hundred and fifty lawyers should do business together, ought not to be expected. But to return again to our subject.

Those who thought seven States competent to the ratification, being very restless under the loss of their motion, I proposed, on the third of January, to meet them on middle ground, and therefore moved a resolution, which premised, that there were but seven States present, who were unanimous for the ratification, but that they differed in opinion on the question of competency; that those however in the negative were unwilling that any powers which it might be supposed they possessed, should remain unexercised for the restoration of peace, provided it could be done, saving their good faith, and without importing any opinion of Congress, that seven States were competent, and resolving that the

treaty be ratified so far as they had power; that it should be transmitted to our ministers, with instructions to keep it uncommunicated; to endeavor to obtain three months longer for exchange of ratifications; that they should be informed, that so soon as nine States shall be present, a ratification by nine shall be sent them: if this should get to them before the ultimate point of time for exchange, they were to use it, and not the other; if not, they were to offer the act of the seven States in exchange, informing them the treaty had come to hand while Congress was not in session; that but seven States were as yet assembled, and these had unanimously concurred in the ratification. This was debated on the third and fourth; and on the fifth, a vessel being to sail for England, from this port (Annapolis), the House directed the President to write to our ministers accordingly.

January 14. Delegates from Connecticut having attended yesterday, and another from South Carolina coming in this day, the treaty was ratified without a dissenting voice; and three instruments of ratification were ordered to be made out, one of which was sent by Colonel Harmer, another by Colonel Franks, and the third transmitted to the Agent of Marine, to be forwarded by any good opportunity.

Congress soon took up the consideration of their foreign relations. They deemed it necessary to get their commerce placed with every nation, on a footing as favorable as that of other nations; and for this purpose, to propose to each a distinct treaty of commerce. This act too would amount to an acknowledgment, by each, of our independence, and of our reception into the fraternity of nations; which, although as possessing our station of right, and in fact we would not condescend to ask, we were not unwilling to furnish opportunities for receiving their friendly salutations and welcome. With France, the United Netherlands, and Sweden, we had already treaties of commerce; but commissions were given for those countries also, should any amendments be thought necessary. The other States to which treaties were to be proposed, were England, Hamburg, Saxony, Prussia, Denmark, Russia, Austria, Venice, Rome, Naples, Tuscany, Sardinia, Genoa, Spain, Portugal, the Porte, Algiers, Tripoli, Tunis, and Morocco.

On the 7th of May Congress resolved that a Minister Plenipotentiary should be appointed, in addition to Mr. Adams and Dr. Franklin, for negotiating treaties of commerce with foreign nations, and I was elected to that duty. I accordingly left Annapolis on the 11th, took with me my eldest daughter, then at Philadelphia (the two others being too young for the voyage), and proceeded to Boston, in quest of a passage. While passing through the different States, I made a point of informing myself of the state of the commerce of each; went on to New Hampshire with the same view, and returned to Boston. Thence I sailed on the 5th of July, in the Ceres, a merchant ship of Mr. Nathaniel Tracey, bound to Cowes. He was himself a passenger, and, after a pleasant voyage of nineteen days, from land to land, we arrived at Cowes on the 26th. I was detained there a few days by the indisposition of my daughter. On the 30th, we embarked for Havre, arrived there on the 31st, left it on the 3d of August, and arrived at Paris on the 6th. I called immediately on Dr. Franklin, at Passy, communicated to him our charge, and we wrote to Mr. Adams, then at the Hague, to join us at Paris.

Before I had left America, that is to say, in the year 1781, I had received a letter from M. de Marbois, of the French legation in Philadelphia, informing me, he had been instructed by his government to obtain such statistical accounts of the different States of our Union, as might be useful for their information; and addressing to me a number of queries relative to the State of Virginia. I had always made it a practice, whenever an opportunity occurred of obtaining any information of our country, which might be of use to me in any station, public or private, to commit it to writing. These memoranda were on loose papers, bundled up without order, and difficult of recurrence, when I had occasion for a particular one. I thought this a good occasion to embody their substance, which I did in the order of Mr. Marbois' queries, so as to answer his wish, and to arrange them for my own use. Some friends, to whom they were occasionally communicated, wished for copies; but their volume rendering this too laborious by hand, I proposed to get a few printed, for their gratification. I was asked such a

price, however, as exceeded the importance of the object. On my arrival at Paris, I found it could be done for a fourth of what I had been asked here. I therefore corrected and enlarged them, and had two hundred copies printed, under the title of "Notes on Virginia." I gave a very few copies to some particular friends in Europe, and sent the rest to my friends in America. An European copy, by the death of the owner, got into the hands of a bookseller, who engaged its translation, and when ready for the press, communicated his intentions and manuscript to me, suggesting that I should correct it, without asking any other permission for the publication. I never had seen so wretched an attempt at translation. Interverted, abridged, mutilated, and often reversing the sense of the original, I found it a blotch of errors, from beginning to end. I corrected some of the most material, and, in that form, it was printed in French. A London bookseller, on seeing the translation, requested me to permit him to print the English original. I thought it best to do so, to let the world see that it was not really so bad as the French translation had made it appear. And this is the true history of that publication.

Mr. Adams soon joined us at Paris, and our first employment was to prepare a general form, to be proposed to such nations as were disposed to treat with us. During the negotiations for peace with the British Commissioner, David Hartley, our Commissioners had proposed, on the suggestion of Dr. Franklin, to insert an article, exempting from capture by the public or private armed ships, of either belligerent, when at war, all merchant vessels and their cargoes, employed merely in carrying on the commerce between nations. It was refused by England, and unwisely, in my opinion. For, in the case of a war with us, their superior commerce places infinitely more at hazard on the ocean, than ours; and, as hawks abound in proportion to game, so our privateers would swarm, in proportion to the wealth exposed to their prize, while theirs would be few, for want of subjects of capture. We inserted this article in our form, with a provision against the molestation of fishermen, husbandmen, citizens unarmed, and following their occupations in unfortified places, for the humane treatment of prisoners of war, the abolition of con-

traband of war, which exposes merchant vessels to such vexatious and ruinous detentions and abuses; and for the principle of free bottoms, free goods.

In a conference with the Count de Vergennes, it was thought better to leave to legislative regulation, on both sides, such modifications of our commercial intercourse, as would voluntarily flow from amicable dispositions. Without urging, we sounded the ministers of the several European nations, at the court of Versailles, on their dispositions towards mutual commerce, and the expediency of encouraging it by the protection of a treaty. Old Frederic, of Prussia, met us cordially, and without hesitation, and appointing the Baron de Thulemeyer, his minister at the Hague, to negotiate with us, we communicated to him our Projét, which, with little alteration by the King, was soon concluded. Denmark and Tuscany entered also into negotiations with us. Other powers appearing indifferent, we did not thing it proper to press them. They seemed, in fact, to know little about us, but as rebels, who had been successful in throwing off the yoke of the mother country. They were ignorant of our commerce, which had been always monopolized by England, and of the exchange of articles it might offer advantageously to both parties. They were inclined, therefore, to stand aloof, until they could see better what relations might be usefully instituted with us. The negotiations, therefore, begun with Denmark and Tuscany, we protracted designedly, until our powers had expired; and abstained from making new propositions to others having no colonies; because our commerce being an exchange of raw for wrought materials, is a competent price for admission into the colonies of those possessing them; but were we to give it, without price, to others, all would claim it, without price, on the ordinary ground of *gentis amicissimæ*.

Mr. Adams being appointed Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States, to London, left us in June, and in July, 1785, Dr. Franklin returned to America, and I was appointed his successor at Paris. In February, 1786, Mr. Adams wrote to me, pressingly, to join him in London immediately, as he thought he discovered there some symptoms of better disposition towards us. Colonel Smith, his secretary of legation,

was the bearer of his urgencies for my immediate attendance. I, accordingly, left Paris on the 1st of March, and, on my arrival in London, we agreed on a very summary form of treaty, proposing an exchange of citizenship for our citizens, our ships, and our productions generally, except as to office. On my presentation, as usual, to the King and Queen, at their levées, it was impossible for anything to be more ungracious, than their notice of Mr. Adams and myself. I saw, at once, that the ulcerations of mind in that quarter, left nothing to be expected on the subject of my attendance; and, on the first conference with the Marquis of Caermarthen, the Minister for foreign affairs, the distance and disinclination which he betrayed in his conversation, the vagueness and evasions of his answers to us, confirmed me in the belief of their aversion to have anything to do with us. We delivered him, however, our Projét, Mr. Adams not despairing as much as I did, of its effect. We afterwards, by one or more notes, requested his appointment of an interview and conference, which, without directly declining, he evaded, by pretenses of other pressing occupations for the moment. After staying there seven weeks, till within a few days of the expiration of our commission, I informed the minister, by note, that my duties at Paris required my return to that place, and that I should, with pleasure, be the bearer of any commands to his Ambassador there. He answered, that he had none, and, wishing me a pleasant journey, I left London the 26th, and arrived at Paris the 30th of April.

A dislocated wrist, unsuccessfully set, occasioned advice from my surgeon, to try the mineral waters of Aix, in Provence, as a corroborant. I left Paris for that place therefore, on the 28th of February, and proceeded up the Seine, through Champagne and Burgundy, and down the Rhone through the Beaujolais by Lyons, Avignon, Nismes to Aix; where, finding on trial no benefit from the waters, I concluded to visit the rice country of Piedmont, to see if anything might be learned there, to benefit the rivalship of our Carolina rice with that, and thence to make a tour of the seaport towns of France, along its Southern and Western coast, to inform myself, if anything could be done to favor our commerce with them. From Aix, therefore, I took my route

by Marseilles, Toulon, Hieres, Nice, across the Col de Tende, by Coni, Turin, Vercelli, Novara, Milan, Pavia, Novi, Genoa. Thence, returning along the coast of Savona, Noli, Albenga, Oneglia, Monaco, Nice, Antibes, Frejus, Aix, Marseilles, Avignon, Nismes, Montpellier, Frontignan, Cette, Agde, and along the canal of Languedoc, by Bezieres, Narbonne, Cascassonne, Castelnaudari, through the Souterrain of St. Feriol, and back by Castelnaudari, to Toulouse; thence to Montauban, and down the Garonne by Langon to Bordeaux. Thence to Rochefort, la Rochelle, Nantes, L'Orient; then back by Rennes to Nantes, and up the Loire by Angers, Tours, Amboise, Blois to Orleans, thence direct to Paris, where I arrived on the 10th of June. Soon after my return from this journey, to wit, about the latter part of July, I received my younger daughter, Maria, from Virginia, by the way of London, the youngest having died some time before.

Our first essay, in America, to establish a federative government had fallen, on trial, very short of its object. During the war of Independence, while the pressure of an external enemy hooped us together, and their enterprises kept us necessarily on the alert, the spirit of the people, excited by danger, was a supplement to the Confederation, and urged them to zealous exertions, whether claimed by that instrument or not; but, when peace and safety were restored, and every man became engaged in useful and profitable occupation, less attention was paid to the calls of Congress. The fundamental defect of the Confederation was, that Congress was not authorized to act immediately on the people, and by its own officers. Their power was only requisitory, and these requisitions were addressed to the several Legislatures, to be by them carried into execution, without other coercion than the moral principle of duty. This allowed, in fact, a negative to every Legislature, on every measure proposed by Congress; a negative so frequently exercised in practice, as to benumb the action of the Federal government, and to render it inefficient in its general objects, and more especially in pecuniary and foreign concerns. The want, too, of a separation of the Legislative, Executive, and Judiciary functions, worked disadvantageously in practice. Yet this state of things afforded a happy augury of the future march of our Con-

federacy, when it was seen that the good sense and good dispositions of the people, as soon as they perceived the incompetence of their first compact, instead of leaving its correction to insurrection and civil war, agreed, with one voice, to elect deputies to a general Convention, who should peaceably meet and agree on such a Constitution as "would ensure peace, justice, liberty, the common defense and general welfare."

This Convention met at Philadelphia on the 25th of May, '87. It sat with closed doors, and kept all its proceedings secret, until its dissolution on the 17th of September, when the results of its labors were published all together. I received a copy, early in November, and read and contemplated its provisions with great satisfaction. As not a member of the Convention, however, nor probably a single citizen of the Union, had approved it in all its parts, so I, too, found articles which I thought objectionable. The absence of express declarations ensuring freedom of religion, freedom of the press, freedom of the person under the uninterrupted protection of the Habeas corpus, and trial by jury in Civil as well as in Criminal cases, excited my jealousy; and the reëligibility of the President for life, I quite disapproved. I expressed freely, in letters to my friends, and most particularly to Mr. Madison and General Washington, my approbations and objections. How the good should be secured and the ill brought to rights, was the difficulty. To refer it back to a new Convention might endanger the loss of the whole.

My first idea was, that the nine States first acting, should accept it unconditionally, and thus secure what in it was good, and that the four last should accept on the previous condition, that certain amendments should be agreed to; but a better course was devised, of accepting the whole, and trusting that the good sense and honest intentions of our citizens, would make the alterations which should be deemed necessary. Accordingly, all accepted, six without objection, and seven with recommendations of specified amendments. Those respecting the press, religion, and juries, with several others, of great value, were accordingly made; but the Habeas corpus was left to the discretion of Congress, and the amendment against the reëligibility of the President was not pro-

posed. My fears of that feature were founded on the importance of the office, on the fierce contentions it might excite among ourselves, if continuable for life, and the dangers of interference, either with money or arms, by foreign nations, to whom the choice of an American President might become interesting. Examples of this abounded in history; in the case of the Roman Emperors, for instance; of the Popes, while of any significance; of the German Emperors, the Kings of Poland, and the Deys of Barbary. I had observed, too, in the feudal history, and in the recent instance, particularly, of the Stadtholder of Holland, how easily offices, or tenures for life, slide into inheritances. My wish, therefore, was, that the President should be elected for seven years, and be ineligible afterwards. This term I thought sufficient to enable him, with the concurrence of the Legislature, to carry through and establish any system of improvement he should propose for the general good. But the practice adopted, I think, is better, allowing his continuance for eight years, with a liability to be dropped at half way of the term, making that a period of probation. That his continuance should be restrained to seven years, was the opinion of the Convention at an earlier stage of its session, when it voted that term, by a majority of eight against two, and by a simple majority that he should be ineligible a second time. This opinion was confirmed by the House so late as July 26, referred to the Committee of detail, reported favorably by them, and changed to the present form by final vote, on the last day but one only of their session. Of this change, three States expressed their disapprobation; New York, by recommending an amendment, that the President should not be eligible a third time, and Virginia and North Carolina that he should not be capable of serving more than eight, in any term of sixteen years; and though this amendment has not been made in form, yet practice seems to have established it. The example of four Presidents voluntarily retiring at the end of their eighth year, and the progress of public opinion, that the principle is salutary, have given it in practice the force of precedent and usage; insomuch, that, should a President consent to be a candidate for a third election, I trust he would be rejected, on this demonstration of ambitious views.

The States General were opened on the 5th of May, '89, by speeches from the King, the Garde des Sceaux, Lamoignon, and M. Necker. The last was thought to trip too lightly over the constitutional reformations which were expected. His notices of them in this speech, were not as full as in his previous "Rapport au Roi." This was observed, to his disadvantage; but much allowance should have been made for the situation in which he was placed, between his own counsels, and those of the ministers and party of the court. Overruled in his own opinions, compelled to deliver, and to gloss over those of his opponents, and even to keep their secrets, he could not come forward in his own attitude.

The composition of the Assembly, although equivalent, on the whole, to what had been expected, was something different in its elements. It had been supposed, that a superior education would carry into the scale of the Commons a respectable portion of the Noblesse. It did so as to those of Paris, of its vicinity, and of the other considerable cities, whose greater intercourse with enlightened society had liberalized their minds, and prepared them to advance up to the measure of the times. But the Noblesse of the country, which constituted two-thirds of that body, were far in their rear. Residing constantly on their patrimonial feuds, and familiarized, by daily habit, with Seigneurial powers and practices, they had not yet learned to suspect their inconsistence with reason and right. They were willing to submit to equality of taxation, but not to descend from their rank and prerogatives to be incorporated in session with the Tiers etat. Among the Clergy, on the other hand, it had been apprehended that the higher orders of the Hierarchy, by their wealth and connections, would have carried the elections generally; but it turned out, that in most cases, the lower clergy had obtained the popular majorities. These consisted of the Curés, sons of the peasantry, who had been employed to do all the drudgery of parochial services for ten, twenty, or thirty Louis a year; while their superiors were consuming their princely revenues in palaces of luxury and indolence.

The objects for which this body was convened, being of the first order of importance, I felt it very interesting to understand the views of the parties of which it was composed, and

especially the ideas prevalent as to the organization contemplated for their government. I went, therefore, daily from Paris to Versailles, and attended their debates, generally till the hour of adjournment. Those of the Noblesse were impassioned and tempestuous. They had some able men on both sides, actuated by equal zeal. The debates of the Commons were temperate, rational, and inflexibly firm. As preliminary to all other business, the awful questions came on, shall the States sit in one, or in distinct apartments? And shall they vote by heads or houses? The opposition was soon found to consist of the Episcopal order among the clergy, and two-thirds of the Noblesse; while the Tiers etat were, to a man, united and determined. After various propositions of compromise had failed, the Commons undertook to cut the Gordian knot. The Abbe Sieyes, the most logical head of the nation, (author of the pamphlet "Qu'est ce que le Tiers etat?" which had electrified that country, as Paine's Common Sense did us,) after an impressive speech on the 10th of June, moved that a last invitation should be sent to the Noblesse and Clergy, to attend in the hall of the States, collectively or individually, for the verification of powers, to which the Commons would proceed immediately, either in their presence or absence. This verification being finished, a motion was made, on the 15th, that they should constitute themselves a National Assembly; which was decided on the 17th, by a majority of four-fifths. During the debates on this question, about twenty of the Curés had joined them, and a proposition was made, in the chamber of the Clergy, that their whole body should join. This was rejected, at first, by a small majority only; but, being afterwards somewhat modified, it was decided affirmatively, by a majority of eleven. While this was under debate, and unknown to the court, to wit, on the 19th, a council was held in the afternoon, at Marly, wherein it was proposed that the King should interpose, by a declaration of his sentiments, in a *seance royale.*

A form of declaration was proposed by Necker, which, while it censured, in general, the proceedings, both of the Nobles and Commons, announced the King's views, such as substantially to coincide with the Commons. It was agreed to in Council, the *seance* was fixed for the 22d, the meetings

of the States were till then to be suspended, and everything, in the meantime, kept secret. The members, the next morning (the 20th) repairing to their house, as usual, found the doors shut and guarded, a proclamation posted up for a *seance royale* on the 22d, and a suspension of their meetings in the meantime. Concluding that their dissolution was now to take place, they repaired to a building called the "Jeu de paume" (or Tennis court) and there bound themselves by oath to each other, never to separate, of their own accord, till they had settled a constitution for the nation, on a solid basis, and, if separated by force, that they would reassemble in some other place. The next day they met in the church of St. Louis, and were joined by a majority of the clergy. The heads of the Aristocracy saw that all was lost without some bold exertion. The King was still at Marly. Nobody was permitted to approach him but their friends. He was assailed by falsehoods in all shapes. He was made to believe that the Commons were about to absolve the army from their oath of fidelity to him, and to raise their pay. The court party were now all rage and desperation. They procured a committee to be held, consisting of the King and his Ministers, to which Monsieur and the Count d'Artois should be admitted. At this committee, the latter attacked M. Necker personally, arraigned his declaration, and proposed one which some of his prompters had put into his hands. M. Necker was brow-beaten and intimidated, and the King shaken. He determined that the two plans should be deliberated on the next day, and the *seance royale* put off a day longer. This encouraged a fiercer attack on M. Necker the next day. His draft of a declaration was entirely broken up, and that of the Count d'Artois inserted into it. Himself and Montmorin offered their resignation, which was refused; the Count d'Artois saying to M. Necker, "No sir, you must be kept as the hostage; we hold you responsible for all the ill which shall happen." This change of plan was immediately whispered without doors. The Noblesse were in triumph; the people in consternation.

I was quite alarmed at this state of things. The soldiery had not yet indicated which side they should take, and that which they should support would be sure to prevail. I con-

sidered a successful reformation of government in France, as insuring a general reformation through Europe, and the resurrection, to a new life, of their people, now ground to dust by the abuses of the governing powers. I was much acquainted with the leading patriots of the Assembly. Being from a country which had successfully passed through a similar reformation, they were disposed to my acquaintance, and had some confidence in me. I urged, most strenuously, an immediate compromise; to secure what the government was now ready to yield, and trust to future occasions for what might still be wanting. It was well understood that the King would grant, at this time, 1. Freedom of the person by Habeas corpus: 2. Freedom of conscience: 3. Freedom of the press: 4. Trial by jury: 5. A representative Legislature: 6. Annual meetings: 7. The origination of laws: 8. The exclusive right of taxation and appropriation: and 9. The responsibility of Ministers; and with the exercise of these powers they could obtain, in future, whatever might be further necessary to improve and preserve their constitution. They thought otherwise, however, and events have proved their lamentable error. For, after thirty years of war, foreign and domestic, the loss of millions of lives, the prostration of private happiness, and the foreign subjugation of their own country for a time, they have obtained no more, nor even that securely. They were unconscious of (for who could foresee?) the melancholy sequel of their well-meant perseverance; that their physical force would be usurped by a first tyrant to trample on the independence, and even the existence of other nations: that this would afford a fatal example for the atrocious conspiracy of Kings against their people; would generate their unholy and homicide alliance to make common cause among themselves, and to crush, by the power of the whole, the efforts of any part to moderate their abuses and oppressions.

When the King passed, the next day, through the lane formed from the Chateau to the "Hotel des etats," there was a dead silence. He was about an hour in the House, delivering his speech and declaration. On his coming out, a feeble cry of "vive le Roi" was raised by some children, but the people remained silent and sullen. In the close of his

speech, he had ordered that the members should follow him, and resume their deliberations the next day. The Noblesse followed him, and so did the Clergy, except about thirty, who, with the Tiers, remained in the room, and entered into deliberation. They protested against what the King had done, adhered to all their former proceedings, and resolved the inviolability of their own persons. An officer came, to order them out of the room in the King's name. "Tell those who sent you," said Mirabeau, "that we shall not move hence but at our own will, or the point of the bayonet." In the afternoon, the people, uneasy, began to assemble in great numbers in the courts, and vicinities of the palace. This produced alarm. The Queen sent for M. Necker. He was conducted, amidst the shouts and acclamations of the multitude, who filled all the apartments of the palace. He was a few minutes only with the Queen, and what passed between them did not transpire. The King went out to ride. He passed through the crowd to his carriage, and into it, without being in the least noticed. As M. Necker followed him, universal acclamations were raised of "vive Monsieur Necker, vive le sauveur de la France opprimée." He was conducted back to his house with the same demonstrations of affection and anxiety. About two hundred deputies of the Tiers, catching the enthusiasm of the moment, went to his house, and extorted from him a promise that he would not resign. On the 25th, forty-eight of the Nobles joined the Tiers, and among them the Duke of Orleans. There were then with them one hundred and sixty-four members of the Clergy, although the minority of that body still sat apart, and called themselves the Chamber of the Clergy. On the 26th, the Archbishop of Paris joined the Tiers, as did some others of the Clergy and of the Noblesse.

These proceedings had thrown the people into violent ferment. It gained the soldiery, first of the French guards, extended to those of every other denomination, except the Swiss, and even to the body guards of the King. They began to quit their barracks, to assemble in squads, to declare they would defend the life of the King, but would not be the murderers of their fellow-citizens. They called themselves the soldiers *of the nation,* and left now no doubt on which side

they would be, in case of rupture. Similar accounts came in from the troops in other parts of the kingdom, giving good reason to believe they would side with their fathers and brothers, rather than with their officers. The operation of this medicine at Versailles was as sudden as it was powerful. The alarm there was so complete, that in the afternoon of the 27th, the King wrote, with his own hand, letters to the Presidents of the Clergy and Nobles, engaging them immediately to join the Tiers. These two bodies were debating, and hesitating, when notes from the Count d'Artois decided their compliance. They went in a body, and took their seats with the Tiers, and thus rendered the union of the orders in one chamber complete.

The Assembly now entered on the business of their mission, and first proceeded to arrange the order in which they would take up the heads of their constitution, as follows:

First, and as Preliminary to the whole, a general Declaration of the Rights of Man. Then, specifically, the Principles of the Monarchy; Rights of the Nation; rights of the King; rights of the Citizens; organization and rights of the National Assembly; forms necessary for the enactment of Laws; organization and functions of the Provincial and Municipal Assemblies; duties and limits of the Judiciary power; functions and duties of the Military power.

A Declaration of the Rights of Man, as the preliminary of their work, was accordingly prepared and proposed by the Marquis de La Fayette.

But the quiet of their march was soon disturbed by information that troops, and particularly the foreign troops, were advancing on Paris from various quarters. The King had probably been advised to this, on the pretext of preserving peace in Paris. But his advisers were believed to have other things in contemplation. The Marshal de Broglio was appointed to their command, a high-flying aristocrat, cool and capable of everything. Some of the French guards were soon arrested, under other pretexts, but really, on account of their dispositions in favor of the National cause. The people of Paris forced their prison, liberated them, and sent a deputation to the Assembly to solicit a pardon. The Assembly recommended peace and order to the people of Paris, the pris-

oners to the King, and asked from him the removal of the troops. His answer was negative and dry, saying they might remove themselves, if they pleased, to Noyons or Soissons. In the meantime, these troops, to the number of twenty or thirty thousand, had arrived, and were posted in, and between Paris and Versailles. The bridges and passes were guarded. At three o'clock in the afternoon of the 11th of July, the Count de La Luzerne was sent to notify M. Necker of his dismission, and to enjoin him to retire instantly, without saying a word of it to anybody. He went home, dined, and proposed to his wife a visit to a friend, but went in fact to his country house at St. Ouen, and at midnight set out for Brussels. This was not known till the next day (the 12th,) when the whole Ministry was changed, except Villedeuil, of the domestic department, and Barenton, Garde des sceaux. The changes were as follows:

The Baron de Breteuil, President of the Council of Finance; de la Galaisiere, Comptroller General, in the room of M. Necker; the Marshal de Broglio, Minister of War, and Foulon under him, in the room of Puy-Segur; the Duke de la Vauguyon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, instead of the Count de Montmorin; de La Porte, Minister of Marine, in place of the Count de La Luzerne; St. Priest was also removed from the Council. Luzerne and Puy-Segur had been strongly of the Aristocratic party in the Council, but they were not considered equal to the work now to be done. The King was now completely in the hands of men, the principal among whom had been noted, through their lives, for the Turkish despotism of their characters, and who were associated around the King, as proper instruments for what was to be executed. The news of this change began to be known at Paris, about one or two o'clock. In the afternoon, a body of about one hundred German cavalry were advanced, and drawn up in the Place Louis XV., and about two hundred Swiss posted at a little distance in their rear. This drew people to the spot, who thus accidentally found themselves in front of the troops, merely at first as spectators; but, as their numbers increased, their indignation rose. They retired a few steps, and posted themselves on and behind large piles of stone, large and small, collected in that place for a bridge,

which was to be built adjacent to it. In this position, happening to be in my carriage on a visit, I passed through the lane they had formed, without interruption. But the moment after I had passed, the people attacked the cavalry with stones. They charged, but the advantageous position of the people, and the showers of stones, obliged the horse to retire, and quit the field altogether, leaving one of their number on the ground, and the Swiss in the rear not moving to their aid. This was the signal for universal insurrrection, and this body of cavalry, to avoid being massacred, retired towards Versailles. The people now armed themselves with such weapons as they could find in armorer's shops, and private houses, and with bludgeons; and were roaming all night, through all parts of the city, without any decided object.

The next day (the 13th,) the Assembly pressed on the King to send away the troops, to permit the Bourgeoisie of Paris to arm for the preservation of order in the city, and offered to send a deputation from their body to tranquillize them; but their propositions were refused. A committee of magistrates and electors of the city were appointed by those bodies, to take upon them its government. The people, now openly joined by the French guards, forced the prison of St. Lazare, released all the prisoners, and took a great store of corn, which they carried to the corn-market. Here they got some arms, and the French guards began to form and train them. The city-committee determined to raise forty-eight thousand Bourgeoise, or rather to restrain their numbers to forty-eight thousand. On the 14th, they sent one of their members (Monsieur de Corny) to the Hotel des Invalides, to ask arms for their Garde Bourgeoise. He was followed by, and he found there, a great collection of people. The Governor of the Invalids came out, and represented the impossibility of his delivering arms, without the orders of those from whom he received them. De Corny advised the people then to retire, and retired himself; but the people took possession of the arms. It was remarkable, that not only the Invalids themselves made no opposition, but that a body of five thousand foreign troops, within four hundred yards, never stirred. M. de Corny, and five others, were then sent to ask arms of M. de Launay, Governor of the Bastile. They found a great

collection of people already before the place, and they immediately planted a flag of truce, which was answered by a like flag hoisted on the parapet. The deputation prevailed on the people to fall back a little, advanced themselves to make their demand of the Governor, and in that instant, a discharge from the Bastile killed four persons of those nearest to the deputies. The deputies retired.

I happened to be at the house of M. de Corny, when he returned to it, and received from him a narrative of these transactions. On the retirement of the deputies, the people rushed forward, and almost in an instant, were in possession of a fortification of infinite strength, defended by one hundred men, which in other times had stood several regular sieges, and had never been taken. How they forced their entrance has never been explained. They took all the arms, discharged the prisoners, and such of the garrison as were not killed in the first moment of fury; carried the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, to the Place de Grève, (the place of public execution,) cut off their heads, and sent them through the city, in triumph, to the Palais royal. About the same instant, a treacherous correspondence having been discovered in M. de Flesselles, Prevôt des Marchands, they seized him in the Hotel de Ville, where he was in the execution of his office, and cut off his head. These events, carried imperfectly to Versailles, were the subject of two successive deputations from the Assembly to the King, to both of which he gave dry and hard answers; for nobody had as yet been permitted to inform him, truly and fully, of what had passed at Paris. But at night, the Duke de Liancourt forced his way into the King's bed chamber, and obliged him to hear a full and animated detail of the disasters of the day in Paris. He went to bed fearfully impressed.

The decapitation of de Launay worked powerfully through the night on the whole Aristocratic party; insomuch, that in the morning, those of the greatest influence on the Count d'Artois represented to him the absolute necessity that the King should give up everything to the Assembly. This according with the dispositions of the King, he went about eleven o'clock, accompanied only by his brothers, to the Assembly, and there read to them a speech, in which he asked

their interposition to reëstablish order. Although couched in terms of some caution, yet the manner in which it was delivered, made it evident that it was meant as a surrender at discretion. He returned to the Chateau a foot, accompanied by the Assembly. They sent off a deputation to quiet Paris, at the head of which was the Marquis de La Fayette, who had, the same morning, been named Commandant en chef of the Milice Bourgeoise; and Monsieur Bailly, former President of the States General, was called for as Prevôt des Marchands. The demolition of the Bastile was now ordered and begun. A body of the Swiss guards, of the regiment of Ventimille, and the city horse guards joined the people. The alarm at Versailles increased. The foreign troops were ordered off instantly. Every Minister resigned. The King confirmed Bailly as Prevôt des Marchands, wrote to M. Necker, to recall him, sent his letter open to the Assembly, to be forwarded by them, and invited them to go with him to Paris the next day, to satisfy the city of his dispositions; and that night, and the next morning, the Count d'Artois, and M. de Montesson, a deputy connected with him, Madame de Polignac, Madame de Guiche, and the Count de Vaudreuil, favorites of the Queen, the Abbe de Vermont, her confessor, the Prince of Conde, and Duke of Bourbon fled.

The King came to Paris, leaving the Queen in consternation for his return. Omitting the less important figures of the procession, the King's carriage was in the center; on each side of it, the Assembly, in two ranks a foot; at their head the Marquis de La Fayette, as Commander-in-chief, on horseback, and Bourgeois guards before and behind. About sixty thousand citizens, of all forms and conditions, armed with the conquests of the Bastile and Invalids, as far as they would go, the rest with pistols, swords, pikes, pruning-hooks, scythes, &c., lined all the streets through which the procession passed, and with the crowds of people in the streets, doors, and windows, saluted them everywhere with the cries of "vive la nation," but not a single "vive le Roi" was heard. The King stopped at the Hotel de Ville. There M. Bailly presented, and put into his hat, the popular cockade, and addressed him. The King being unprepared, and unable to answer, Bailly went to him, gathered from him some scraps

of sentences, and made out an answer, which he delivered to the audience, as from the King. On their return, the popular cries were "vive le Roi et la nation." He was conducted by a garde Bourgeoise to his palace at Versailles, and thus concluded an "amende honorable," as no sovereign ever made, and no people ever received.

And here, again, was lost another precious occasion of sparing to France the crimes and cruelties through which she has since passed, and to Europe, and finally America, the evils which flowed on them also from this mortal source. The King was now become a passive machine in the hands of the National Assembly, and had he been left to himself, he would have willingly acquiesced in whatever they should devise as best for the nation. A wise constitution would have been formed, hereditary in his line, himself placed at its head, with powers so large as to enable him to do all the good of his station, and so limited as to restrain him from its abuse. This he would have faithfully administered, and more than this, I do not believe, he ever wished. But he had a Queen of absolute sway over his weak mind and timid virtue, and of a character the reverse of his in all points. This angel, as gaudily painted in the rhapsodies of Burke, with some smartness of fancy, but no sound sense, was proud, disdainful of restraint, indignant at all obstacles to her will, eager in the pursuit of pleasure, and firm enough to hold to her desires, or perish in their wreck. Her inordinate gambling and dissipations, with those of the Count d'Artois, and others of her *clique*, had been a sensible item in the exhaustion of the treasury, which called into action the reforming hand of the nation; and her opposition to it, her inflexible perverseness, and dauntless spirit, led herself to the Guillotine, drew the King on with her, and plunged the world into crimes and calamities which will forever stain the pages of modern history. I have ever believed, that had there been no Queen, there would have been no revolution. No force would have been provoked, nor exercised. The King would have gone hand in hand with the wisdom of his sounder counselors, who, guided by the increased lights of the age, wished only, with the same pace, to advance the principles of their social constitution.

The deed which closed the mortal course of these sovereigns, I shall neither approve nor condemn. I am not prepared to say, that the first magistrate of a nation cannot commit treason against his country, or is unamenable to its punishment; nor yet, that where there is no written law, no regulated tribunal, there is not a law in our hearts, and a power in our hands, given for righteous employment in maintaining right, and redressing wrong. Of those who judged the King, many thought him willfully criminal; many, that his existence would keep the nation in perpetual conflict with the horde of Kings who would war against a generation which might come home to themselves, and that it were better that one should die than all. I should not have voted with this portion of the legislature. I should have shut up the Queen in a convent, putting harm out of her power, and placed the King in his station, investing him with limited powers, which, I verily believe, he would have honestly exercised, according to the measure of his understanding. In this way, no void would have been created, courting the usurpation of a military adventurer, nor occasion given for those enormities which demoralized the nations of the world, and destroyed, and is yet to destroy, millions and millions of its unfortunate inhabitants.

There are three epochs in history, signalized by the total extinction of national morality. The first was of the successors of Alexander, not omitting himself: The next, the successors of the first Cæsar: The third, our own age. This was begun by the partition of Poland, followed by that of the treaty of Pilnitz; next the conflagration of Copenhagen; then the enormities of Bonaparte, partitioning the earth at his will, and devastating it with fire and sword; now the conspiracy of Kings, the successors of Bonaparte, blasphemously calling themselves the Holy Alliance, and treading in the footsteps of their incarcerated leader; not yet, indeed, usurping the government of other nations, avowedly and in detail, but controlling by their armies the forms in which they will permit them to be governed; and reserving, *in petto,* the order and extent of the usurpations further meditated. But I will return from a digression, anticipated, too, in time, into which I have been led by reflection on the criminal passions which

refused to the world a favorable occasion of saving it from the afflictions it has since suffered.

M. Necker had reached Basle before he was overtaken by the letter of the King, inviting him back to resume the office he had recently left. He returned immediately, and all the other Ministers having resigned, a new administration was named, to wit: St. Priest and Montmorin were restored; the Archbishop of Bordeaux was appointed Garde des sceaux, La Tour du Pin, Minister of War; La Luzerne, Minister of Marine. This last was believed to have been effected by the friendship of Montmorin; for although differing in politics, they continued firm in friendship, and Luzerne, although not an able man, was thought an honest one. And the Prince of Bauvau was taken into the Council.

Seven Princes of the blood Royal, six ex-Ministers, and many of the high Noblesse, having fled, and the present Ministers, except Luzerne, being all of the popular party, all the functionaries of government moved, for the present, in perfect harmony.

In the evening of August the 4th, and on the motion of the Viscount de Noailles, brother in law of La Fayette, the Assembly abolished all titles of rank, all the abusive privileges of feudalism, the tithes and casuals of the Clergy, all Provincial privileges, and, in fine, the Feudal regimen generally. To the suppression of tithes, the Abbe Sieyes was vehemently opposed; but his learned and logical arguments were unheeded, and his estimation lessened by a contrast of his egoism (for he was beneficed on them), with the generous abandonment of rights by the other members of the Assembly.

Many days were employed in putting into the form of laws, the numerous demolitions of ancient abuses; which done, they proceeded to the preliminary work of a Declaration of rights. There being much concord of sentiment on the elements of this instrument, it was liberally framed, and passed with a very general approbation. They then appointed a Committee for the "reduction of a projet" of a constitution, at the head of which was the Archbishop of Bordeaux. I received from him, as chairman of the Committee, a letter of July 20th, requesting me to attend and assist at their deliberations; but

I excused myself, on the obvious considerations, that my mission was to the King as Chief Magistrate of the nation, that my duties were limited to the concerns of my own country, and forbade me to intermeddle with the internal transactions of that, in which I had been received under a specific character only. Their plan of a constitution was discussed in sections, and so reported from time to time, as agreed to by the Committee. The first respected the general frame of the government; and that this should be formed into three departments, Executive, Legislative and Judiciary, was generally agreed. But when they proceeded to subordinate developments, many and various shades of opinion came into conflict, and schism, strongly marked, broke the Patriots into fragments of very discordant principles. The first question, Whether there should be a King? met with no open opposition; and it was readily agreed, that the government of France should be monarchial and hereditary. Shall the King have a negative on the laws? Shall that negative be absolute, or suspensive only? Shall there be two Chambers of Legislation? or one only? If two, shall one of them be hereditary? or for life? or for a fixed term? and named by the King? or elected by the people? These questions found strong differences of opinion, and produced repulsive combinations among the Patriots. The Aristocracy was cemented by a common principle, of preserving the ancient regime, or whatever should be nearest to it. Making this their polar star, they moved in phalanx, gave preponderance on every question to the minorities of the Patriots, and always to those who advocated the least change. The features of the new constitution were thus assuming a fearful aspect, and great alarm was produced among the honest Patriots by these dissensions in their ranks.

In this uneasy state of things, I received one day a note from the Marquis de La Fayette, informing me that he should bring a party of six or eight friends to ask a dinner of me the next day. I assured him of their welcome. When they arrived, they were La Fayette himself, Duport, Barnave, Alexander la Meth, Blacon, Mounier, Maubourg, and Dagout. These were leading Patriots, of honest but differing opinions, sensible of the necessity of effecting a coalition by mutual

sacrifices, knowing each other, and not afraid, therefore, to unbosom themselves mutually. This last was a material principle in the selection. With this view, the Marquis had invited the conference, and had fixed the time and place inadvertently, as to the embarrassment under which it might place me. The cloth being removed, and wine set on the table, after the American manner, the Marquis introduced the objects of the conference, by summarily reminding them of the state of things in the Assembly, the course which the principles of the Constitution were taking, and the inevitable result, unless checked by more concord among the Patriots themselves. He observed, that although he also had his opinion, he was ready to sacrifice it to that of his brethren of the same cause; but that a common opinion must now be formed, or the Aristocracy would carry everything, and that, whatever they should now agree on, he, at the head of the National force, would maintain.

The discussions began at the hour of four, and were continued till ten o'clock in the evening; during which time, I was a silent witness to a coolness and candor of argument, unusual in the conflicts of political opinion; to a logical reasoning, and chaste eloquence, disfigured by no gaudy tinsel of rhetoric or declamation, and truly worthy of being placed in parallel with the finest dialogues of antiquity, as handed to us by Xenophon, by Plato and Cicero. The result was, that the King should have a suspensive veto on the laws, that the legislature should be composed of a single body only, and that to be chosen by the people. This Concordate decided the fate of the constitution. The Patriots all rallied to the principles thus settled, carried every question agreeably to them, and reduced the Aristocracy to insignificance and impotence. But duties of exculpation were now incumbent on me.

I waited on Count Montmorin the next morning, and explained to him, with truth and candor, how it had happened that my house had been made the scene of conferences of such a character. He told me, he already knew everything which had passed, that so far from taking umbrage at the use made of my house on that occasion, he earnestly wished I would habitually assist at such conferences, being sure I

should be useful in moderating the warmer spirits, and promoting a wholesome and practicable reformation only. I told him, I knew too well the duties I owed to the King, to the nation, and to my own country, to take any part in councils concerning their internal government, and that I should persevere, with care, in the character of a neutral and passive spectator, with wishes only, and very sincere ones, that those measures might prevail which would be for the greatest good of the nation. I have no doubts, indeed, that this conference was previously known and approved by this honest Minister, who was in confidence and communication with the Patriots, and wished for a reasonable reform of the Constitution.

Here I discontinue my relation of the French Revolution. The minuteness with which I have so far given its details, is disproportioned to the general scale of my narrative. But I have thought it justified by the interest which the whole world must take in this Revolution. As yet, we are but in the first chapter of its history. The appeal to the rights of man, which had been made in the United States, was taken up by France, first of the European nations. From her, the spirit has spread over those of the South. The tyrants of the North have allied indeed against it; but it is irresistible. Their opposition will only multiply its millions of human victims; their own satellites will catch it, and the condition of man through the civilized world, will be finally and greatly ameliorated. This is a wonderful instance of great events from small causes. So inscrutable is the arrangement of causes and consequences in this world, that a two-penny duty on tea, unjustly imposed in a sequestered part of it, changes the condition of all its inhabitants. I have been more minute in relating the early transactions of this regeneration, because I was in circumstances peculiarly favorable for a knowledge of the truth. Possessing the confidence and intimacy of the leading Patriots, and more than all, of the Marquis Fayette, their head and Atlas, who had no secrets from me, I learned with correctness the views and proceedings of that party; while my intercourse with the diplomatic missionaries of Europe at Paris, all of them with the court, and eager in prying into its councils and proceedings, gave me a knowledge

of these also. My information was always, and immediately committed to writing, in letters to Mr. Jay, and often to my friends, and a recurrence to these letters now insures me against errors of memory.

These opportunities of information ceased at this period, with my retirement from this interesting scene of action. I had been more than a year soliciting leave to go home, with a view to place my daughters in the society and care of their friends, and to return for a short time to my station at Paris. But the metamorphosis through which our government was then passing from its Chrysalid to its Organic form suspended its action in a great degree; and it was not till the last of August, that I received the permission I had asked. And here, I cannot leave this great and good country, without expressing my sense of its preëminence of character among the nations of the earth. A more benevolent people I have never known, nor greater warmth and devotedness in their select friendships. Their kindness and accommodation to strangers is unparalleled, and the hospitality of Paris is beyond anything I had conceived to be practicable in a large city. Their eminence, too, in science, the communicative dispositions of their scientific men, the politeness of the general manners, the ease and vivacity of their conversation, give a charm to their society, to be found nowhere else. In a comparison of this, with other countries, we have the proof of primacy, which was given to Themistocles, after the battle of Salamis. Every general voted to himself the first reward of valor, and the second to Themistocles. So, ask the traveled inhabitant of any nation, in what country on earth would you rather live?—Certainly, in my own, where are all my friends, my relations, and the earliest and sweetest affections and recollections of my life. Which would be your second choice? France.

On the 26th of September I left Paris for Havre, where I was detained by contrary winds until the 8th of October. On that day, and the 9th, I crossed over to Cowes, where I had engaged the Clermont, Capt. Colley, to touch for me. She did so; but here again we were detained by contrary winds, until the 22d, when we embarked, and landed at Norfolk on the 23d of November. On my way home, I passed

some days at Eppington, in Chesterfield, the residence of my friend and connection, Mr. Eppes; and, while there, I received a letter from the President, General Washington, by express, covering an appointment to be Secretary of State. I received it with real regret. My wish had been to return to Paris, where I had left my household establishment, as if there myself, and to see the end of the Revolution, which I then thought would be certainly and happily closed in less than a year. I then meant to return home, to withdraw from political life, into which I had been impressed by the circumstances of the times, to sink into the bosom of my family and friends, and devote myself to studies more congenial to my mind. In my answer of December 15th, I expressed these dispositions candidly to the President, and my preference of a return to Paris; but assured him, that if it was believed I could be more useful in the administration of the government, I would sacrifice my own inclinations without hesitation, and repair to that destination; this I left to his decision. I arrived at Monticello on the 23d of December, where I received a second letter from the President, expressing his continued wish that I should take my station there, but leaving me still at liberty to continue in my former office, if I could not reconcile myself to that now proposed. This silenced my reluctance, and I accepted the new appointment.

In the interval of my stay at home, my eldest daughter had been happily married to the eldest son of the Tuckahoe branch of Randolphs, a young gentleman of genius, science, and honorable mind, who afterwards filled a dignified station in the General Government, and the most dignified in his own State. I left Monticello on the first of March, 1790, for New York. At Philadelphia I called on the venerable and beloved Franklin. He was then on the bed of sickness from which he never rose. My recent return from a country in which he had left so many friends, and the perilous convulsions to which they had been exposed, revived all his anxieties to know what part they had taken, what had been their course, and what their fate. He went over all in succession, with a rapidity and animation almost too much for his strength. When all his inquiries were satisfied, and a pause took place,

I told him I had learned with much pleasure that, since his return to America, he had been occupied in preparing for the world the history of his own life. "I cannot say much of that," said he; "but I will give you a sample of what I shall leave;" and he directed his little grandson (William Bache) who was standing by the bedside, to hand him a paper from the table, to which he pointed. He did so; and the Doctor putting it into my hands, desired me to take it and read it at my leisure. It was about a quire of folio paper, written in a large and running hand, very like his own. I looked into it slightly, then shut it, and said I would accept his permission to read it, and would carefully return it. He said, "No, keep it." Not certain of his meaning, I again looked into it, folded it for my pocket, and said again, I would certainly return it. "No," said he, "keep it." I put it into my pocket, and shortly after took leave of him.

He died on the 17th of the ensuing month of April; and as I understood that he had bequeathed all his papers to his grandson, William Temple Franklin, I immediately wrote to Mr. Franklin, to inform him I possessed this paper, which I should consider as his property, and would deliver to his order. He came on immediately to New York, called on me for it, and I delivered it to him. As he put it into his pocket, he said carelessly, he had either the original, or another copy of it, I do not recollect which. This last expression struck my attention forcibly, and for the first time suggested to me the thought that Dr. Franklin had meant it as a confidential deposit in my hands, and that I had done wrong in parting from it. I have not yet seen the collection he published of Dr. Franklin's works, and, therefore, know not if this is among them. I have been told it is not. It contained a narrative of the negotiations between Dr. Franklin and the British Ministry, when he was endeavoring to prevent the contest of arms which followed. The negotiation was brought about by the intervention of Lord Howe and his sister, who, I believe, was called Lady Howe, but I may misremember her title. Lord Howe seems to have been friendly to America, and exceedingly anxious to prevent a rupture. His intimacy with Dr. Franklin, and his position with the Ministry, induced him to undertake a mediation

between them; in which his sister seemed to have been associated. They carried from one to the other, backwards and forwards, the several propositions and answers which passed, and seconded with their own intercessions, the importance of mutual sacrifices, to preserve the peace and connection of the two countries.

I remember that Lord North's answers were dry, unyielding, in the spirit of unconditional submission, and betrayed an absolute indifference to the occurrence of a rupture; and he said to the mediators distinctly, at last, that "a rebellion was not to be deprecated on the part of Great Britain; that the confiscations it would produce would provide for many of their friends." This expression was reported by the mediators to Dr. Franklin, and indicated so cool and calculated a purpose in the Ministry, as to render compromise hopeless, and the negotiation was discontinued. If this is not among the papers published, we ask, what has become of it? I delivered it with my own hands, into those of Temple Franklin. It certainly established views so atrocious in the British government, that its suppression would, to them, be worth a great price. But could the grandson of Dr. Franklin be, in such degree, an accomplice in the parricide of the memory of his immortal grandfather? The suspension for more than twenty years of the general publication, bequeathed and confided to him, produced, for awhile, hard suspicions against him; and if, at last, all are not published, a part of these suspicions may remain with some.

I arrived at New York on the 21st of March, where Congress was in session.

END OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

# JEANNE DU BARRY

## THE REAL RULER OF FRANCE UNDER LOUIS XV

## 1746-1793

### (INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

Jeanne Vaubernier, later the Countess Du Barry, is perhaps the most noted courtesan in history. Her memoirs have thus a double value, first as showing us how France was really ruled in the days of kingship by "divine right," second as showing how the world looked to a woman of her type—what she thought of it, and what it thought of her. These memoirs thus form a profoundly interesting human document, though the reader should not accept them as being wholly and precisely true. There are, in fact, two sources of doubt connected with them. For one thing, it has been questioned whether Jeanne Du Barry actually wrote them, as they were not published until long after her arrest and execution. Hence their authenticity can only be judged by their contents. As to this, they have been verified by so many points of evidence, they show such close and unfailing knowledge of all Mme. Du Barry's affairs, that critics are agreed that she must have at least left behind a set of personal reminiscences so extensive that all that can have been added to them is somewhat of literary body and coherence. The mind of the Du Barry certainly speaks to us here, and probably in her actual words.

The other and stronger reason for questioning the memoirs is, of course, the riddle of how far the King's mistress has chosen to tell the truth about her feelings, words and purposes. Other writers of her time have flatly contradicted her upon such points, representing her memoirs not as being ignorant of certain scenes but as knowing these in detail and then deliberately falsifying them. Perhaps our age can afford to leave Mme. Du Barry's veracity, like her morality, to the judgment of a higher power and content ourselves with reading her narrative as a picture of the strangely perverted age in which she lived.

When, in 1769, she was first introduced to King Louis XV he was a man of almost sixty, old in vice and self-indulgence. He had been ruled by many previous mistresses, but by none so completely as he was to be by this one. Jeanne held him by her wit and her coarse jests as well as by her beauty. She tells the whole story frankly, but often rambles so far from herself in her narrative of court intrigues that the present

work presents only the personal part of her tale and omits the enormous web of court affairs, anxieties, and petty jealousies which have grown meaningless to our broader, and let us hope saner, age. When Louis XV died of smallpox in 1774, his mistress was promptly dismissed from court. Some friends, however, still clung to her, and she lived in comfort and even comparative wealth until the French Revolution, a quarter century later. Then she was accused of treason, chiefly on the ground that she tried to sell her splendid jewels, the former gifts of the King. These were now declared to have been the property of the State, and she was condemned and guillotined in the same year with the King and Queen who had driven her from their court.

## MEMOIRS

### I

You insist on it, then, my friend, that I shall write the journal of my life. My constant refusals to satisfy your curiosity have not discouraged you. "You have seen so many things!" you are incessantly saying to me; "your adventures are so varied and piquant, the events you have witnessed are so extraordinary and important, that your reminiscences, in my opinion, would be better calculated than any I have ever met with, or can imagine, to throw a light upon the age in which you lived."

You are, perhaps, right, my friend, but am I at liberty to disclose the whole truth? Does not the peculiarity of my position call for certain concealments and repressions? Yet if I write, I would conceal nothing. I wish to withhold nothing; in a word, I am unwilling to lie. I am emboldened, moreover, by the remembrance that I am writing to you—you alone, I mean. Never, as you have promised me, allow these sheets to quit the secrecy of your private cabinet. Reflect on the delicacy of the confidence I am about to place in you. Think of all the petty enmities, the deadly hatred which any indiscretion on your part would necessarily arouse against me. Should the time ever arrive when the possession of these scribblings would endanger you or me in any way, throw them into the flames, and let there be no further question concerning them.

I was born on the 28th of August, 1746, at Vaucouleurs.

Much has been jokingly said at various times of my having first seen the light of day in the same village which produced Jeanne d'Arc. This similarity signifies but little. The wags would have had a more prolific theme had they but known that my mother enumerated amongst her female ancestors the illustrious heroine of Orleans. I do not, however, pretend thence to insinuate that I am descended lineally from Jeanne d'Arc. God preserve me from it! I have too much confidence in the chaste surname which was bestowed upon her, and which forms part of my titles of nobility, although had I lived, as she did, in the time of Charles VII., I should probably have been more jealous, you will say, of the character of Agnes Sorel than of hers. So much for my mother's side. As to my father's family, it was by no means despicable, although some most contemptible things have been said of it. The Vaubernier family, to which my father belonged came from very good citizens and even of petty nobility. I say petty nobility, because, since I have known that of the Court, I dare not boast of belonging to that. It is so lofty and so haughty whilst entrenched behind its musty parchments! I had, notwithstanding, the gratification, one fine day, of seeing one of these nobles with a long genealogy completely humiliated in the person of the Duc de Richelieu. It was at my own house on New Year's Day. The personage in question paid me a visit with all those airs which you may imagine. Suddenly there entered one of my valets, who had been previously instructed. He went straight up to M. the Duc de Richelieu with a pamphlet in his hand, and gave him—guess what!—the famous memorial of the Parliament of Paris against ducal nobility. M. de Richelieu turned pale. Never did I see such an excess of anger as he exhibited; I really thought he would have fallen down dead. I was delighted, for I was not altogether innocent of this mystification. But enough of dukes and nobility; let us now talk of ourselves.

My father, having no fortune, had been compelled to accept a mean situation as clerk at the Barrieres. He married my mother, who was no richer than himself, for love. Of many children who sprang from this marriage, the only survivor is the one who now addresses you. When I came into the

world, Madame Dubreuil, wife of the guard of a diligence at Vaucouleurs, who was attached to my parents, and was pained to see them struggling with the world, wishing to offer all the consolation in her power, proffered her services as my godmother.

A worthy monk was selected by my parents as godfather; he was my father's brother, and known in the country by the name of Père l'Ange. But fortune, who doubtless already favored me, had destined for me another godfather. The war of 1744 brought to our village M. Billard du Monceau, a financier, and a man at once rich and benevolent. He came to Vaucouleurs on the day of my birth. Madame du Dubreuil, only considering the interest of the family, resolved to turn over to him the responsible honor which had been destined for my poor uncle. He accepted it. I had, therefore, as godfather M. Billard du Monceau, who did the thing in a handsome manner, as might be expected from a man of his wealth. I should not forget to tell you that I was baptized in the name of Marie-Jeanne.

As I grew up I became handsomer every day; at least, they told me so; and, considering all things, I do not refuse to believe that such was the case. It is to my face alone (and I know it) that I am indebted to my elevation; and now that my beauty is daily becoming less and less, now that spots of red begin to deface the skin of my countenance which was once so fair, it is not without regret that I remember what I have been. Decrepitude inspires me with horror; I think I would rather be dead than ugly. Let me quit such distressing thoughts.

I was, then, pretty; I had a charming air; but I should more particularly have been seen when decked out in my Sunday clothes. The joy which this apparel gave me added to my beauty, for I gave even then some manifestations of coquetry —it must be inherent in our sex. I was anxious to please: I wished to please even myself. I studied the looking glass of my mother, and those of all our neighbors to which I could obtain access. How many moments have I passed in unsophisticated admiration of my increasing beauty! At first I regarded myself, then my simple gown; my gown, because it was a part of myself, a portion of my little person; and

then, on leaving my dear mirror, I looked at my receding figure as long as I could catch a glimpse of it.

Fortunately for my vanity, I was not the only person who thought me handsome, and my beauty gained me all hearts. Our neighbors vied with each other to make the most of me, caress me, and testify their admiration. Everywhere I was welcomed and my company sought. How happy I was in those days! Fifteen years subsequently my beauty did not obtain the same success. When I appeared at Court the contest was which of the courtiers could find me most ugly. It appeared as though my favor had supplanted the pretensions of all others, and by the general outcry it would have seemed as though I had only come to rival all the ladies of the first rank.

To return to my taste for dress, which was not always so fully satisfied as I desired. My father earned enough for our subsistence and no more. My godmother was dead. As to my godfather, he seemed to have forgotten his pretty little goddaughter. They wrote to him, but he returned no answer; they wrote to him again, and then came some well-sounding phrases, full of promise, but nothing more. Time glided on, and our situation was still the same; that is, very dull and pinched as to means. This was not all: a greater misfortune was in store for us. My father, the sole support of the family, died. I was only eight years of age, but wept very bitterly. In spite of my natural levity, I have always deeply mourned for those who loved me and those whom I loved. I think I still hear the piercing, terrible cry which my mother uttered at the moment when my poor father breathed his last sigh. To the bitter regret of his loss was added the chagrin of the frightful situation in which we were left. A mean stock of furniture, with a few trinkets of no value, was all that remained to us of my father.

After the moments dedicated to grief, the persons who took an interest in us, or pretended to do so, advised us to go to Paris. There we should find, they told us, infallible resources. On the one side, my uncle Ange Gomart, who had been for some time in the monastery of Picpus, and on the other, M. Billard du Monceau, my godfather, were bound decidedly to assist us at this juncture.

My godfather, who was attached to me, though he only saw me occasionally, soon sent me to the convent of Sainte-Aure, near Paris. This convent was temporarily and spiritually directed by the Abbe Grisel, the same whom Voltaire so happily ridiculed. I was a gainer by this change, for my education was somewhat more carefully attended to at the convent of Sainte-Aure than it had been before. I had here masters for all accomplishments and applied myself particularly to drawing, for which I had considerable taste.

I was fifteen years of age and very lovely, more so than any of the young ladies at Sainte-Aure, but I was at the same time so free from affectation, so gay, so lively, so lovable, that they excused the loveliness of my countenance in consequence of the goodness of my heart. Besides, we were all united by the irksomeness of a convent life. Our common wishes tended towards the moment when we should quit the holy prison. In the meanwhile our comfort was in conversing about what was going on outside the walls. My associates were not young women of noble families; they knew nothing of what was doing at court; but then they were acquainted with myriads of anecdotes, which were not the less scandalous because they were plebeian. These anecdotes, which they brought from their homes, were told with the utmost minuteness and unction, and how did we stretch our imaginations to comprehend them fully! How did I envy the lot of those who had heard all these amusing histories out of the convent! Under what brilliant colors did I paint to myself the life of the world! My poor little head was bewildered; my imagination darted forth unbridled, and betook itself to some of the loftiest possible castles in the air! What fêtes did I have there! At a later period I have found in reality these splendid edifices which in the dreams of my early youth I so joyously inhabited. Homage, pleasure, exalted lovers, I found them all that I had formerly coveted—all, all was there but true happiness, which I had, perhaps, forgotten to wish for.

I should amuse you, perhaps, were I to detail all the freaks by which we shortened the time of our retreat. We were indeed "Pickles" in petticoats, and, what is worse,

downright hypocrites. But we are all so—we are always so —we women. Thanks to the education you men folk give us, we learn to cheat you whenever we choose, and the greatest fool of us all can make you believe that black is white.

However, I will tell you, and with the utmost truth, that I was still innocent. There was a something passing within me which told me that I was not formed to live alone but that was all I knew. With the vague ideas of my age, I had always the candor of a child. I only expected from marriage tender caresses and paternal kisses. I insist on this point, because vile pamphleteers, whose silence I would not pay for, have horribly calumniated me. Even my infancy—that pure age which should ever be respected—my very infancy has been placed in a disgusting light. They have made me a monster; my best friends have read the horrid libels, and you, perchance, first of any. Am I wrong in suspecting this? Forgive me; but I have lived so long at Versailles, and amongst courtiers, that I must be allowed to be mistrustful. I doubted the friendship of no person on earth the day I left Sainte-Aure. Since! No, my friend, I do not doubt yours.

II

I WAS installed under the name of Mademoiselle Lançon, at the house of a fashionable modiste, and then I was almost emancipated, almost free. Besides, on the Sunday, which was entirely at our own disposal when we were not left in charge of the shop, we went out very frequently to carry articles of millinery which had been ordered. My first walks in Paris were not taken without fear; however, on the second Sunday of my new existence, I formed the bold project of paying a visit to my former friends of Sainte-Aure. One, Brigitte Rubert, was still at the convent; the other, my good Geneviève Mathon, had left it a week before me to return to her paternal home.

I went on, not without fear, it is true, until I reached the latter's dwelling. I entered and saw Geneviève occupied in her father's kitchen. She saw me, and jumping with joy, ran to me and covered me with kisses; such was my reception, about which I had had so many fears. She introduced

me to her family, who gave me an invitation to dinner, which I accepted. Opposite to me was seated a tall, handsome young man, with dark eyes and brown hair like Geneviève's. It was her brother. Perhaps it was because I loved his sister that I so soon felt a liking for him. I looked at him from the corner of my eye as secretly as possible and found his glance was fixed on me. He anticipated my slightest wishes, and offered me beforehand what I was about to ask for. I wished to drink, and instantly he poured out wine for me. I desired some particular morsel, and the same moment I found it on my plate. His attentions embarrassed me, for I feared lest his family should consider them as peculiar; but they took no notice, or rather viewed it only as a natural and proper gallantry. At the end of the repast, Geneviève, who had only thought up to that time of the pleasure of seeing me again, asked me somewhat abruptly what I was doing. The enquiry troubled me, and I replied to it trembling with embarrassment, so much did I dread a repetition of the scene with Brigitte; but my answer produced no such effect. These worthy people thought it quite well enough that I was a milliner, since I was nothing else. The family kept me as long as they could. They took me for a walk on the boulevards, and after the walk we went to the theater. It was the first time such a pleasure had been presented to me; it so completely laid hold of my mind and imagination that I almost forgot the presence of the brother of Geneviève. He, who was more accustomed than I to the amusements of a theater, saw only me, looked only at me. Seated by my side, he was only thinking how he should express his love for me. He spoke to me with passion, in a language till then unknown to me, but which seemed to me delightful and equally charming to my ear and my heart. One instant (when no one was observing us) he attempted to squeeze my hand; and I, without reflection, without intention, I assure you, lightly returned the pressure of the hand which retained mine. He trembled, and then his countenance beamed; his large, black eyes sparkled like fire, and a beautiful smile played upon his lips.

This day of enchantment, this delicious evening had its termination. My friend and her brother wished to escort

me back to Madame Labille's. Geneviève, on quitting me, embraced me; Nicolas Mathon, still timid, contented himself with kissing my hand. This kiss penetrated to my heart.

I ascended the staircase with slow steps. On reaching my chamber I became excessively pensive. I was in love! I think, my friend, I see you knit your brow, assume a disdainful look, and say to me, "What! you, madam, love Nicolas Mathon, a pastrycook's apprentice! Fie, fie on you, Countess!" Excuse me, sire, you know not what you are talking of. When I became the Comtesse du Barri I knew how to select a lover of exalted rank; but now I was only a modest milliner's girl—I was only Jenny Lançon. Well, now, at the present time, such as fortune has made me, when I call to remembrance all those who have adored me, shall I say that it is not poor Nicolas, perhaps, who pleased me least. I too have known what first love is!

The image of Geneviève's brother pursued me sleeping or waking. Half the night was spent in a long sleeplessness. At length I fell asleep, and the adored image appeared to me in my dream. It seems to me that, in writing these lines, my recollections render me once again innocent and happy. Let me relate my tale somewhat more at length.

The next day, when I had to go into the shop, I had lost my liveliness; my usual buoyancy of spirits had forsaken me; I was dull and pensive. This change astonished my companions, who enquired the cause of my evident depression. I blushed, stammered, hesitated, and at last explained myself so ill that the young ladies of the shop, who had great experience in such matters, were unanimously of opinion that I was in love. I denied it as well as I could, and keeping my secret to myself, determined not to allow it to escape. At that moment I raised my eyes, and through the window of the shop saw Nicolas Mathon, who was walking in a most melancholy mood in the Rue Saint-Honoré.

It was then that my poor little heart began to beat and palpitate in a most alarming degree; something extraordinary passed within me; my whole frame shook with emotion, and I remained stupefied, as some poet says, with my eyes fixed immovably on the young man who was walking up and down the street, and endeavored to smile upon him. He

saw me; the blood mounted to his cheek, and he showed me a paper he held in his hand—it was a letter, I felt sure; a letter to me!—the first love-letter! How impatient was I to possess it! My virtue did not struggle for an instant with my young desire. I had indeed been advised, at Sainte-Aure, to renounce the devil; but Nicolas was an angel, and a correspondence with him I pictured to myself as the most delicious thing in existence. He continued in the street, appearing himself astonished at his own audacity. I made him a sign to approach, which he understood. A lady entered the shop, and I, profiting by the bustle which was thereby occasioned, glided into the passage, and thence gained the door in an instant. Nicolas started when he saw me so near to him. "Is it a letter from Geneviève?" I asked him, with much confidence. "Yes, mademoiselle," he replied, in a faltering voice, and gave me the letter, blushing deeply as he did so. I looked at him, left him, concealed in my corset this precious treasure, and regained the shop before my absence had been perceived.

But it was not all to have the letter; it must be read, too—and how? I could not go up into my room, that was out of rule; and to retire again would have caused a suspicion. At length, after dinner, a favorable moment presented itself. I read it. He told me that he loved me. I knew that before: no matter, I was happy. The poor young man! I must answer him. At the same moment I took up a pen; I could not write, and put it off till the next morning. The next morning came, and at daybreak I was at work. I began, and began again, ten letters, each more foolish than the other. At length I framed this, which contented me for want of a better, and which I remember verbatim, for it was short:

"Sir,—You love me, you say, and wish me to love you. I love Geneviève so much, that it will be no difficulty for me to love her brother. You promise to live only for me. I will confess to you that this promise gives me great pleasure. But how wretched should I be were I to believe you, and you did not keep to your word! I am, perhaps, saying too much. Adieu, sir, I am ashamed; but I am frank and sincere, and you will not abuse the confidence of your sister's friend." I signed

this letter, concealed it in my bosom, and descended quickly to the shop.

I was certain that M. Nicolas would not delay coming again to the house, nor was I mistaken; for about ten o'clock he was at his post. The moment he ascertained that I had seen him, he crossed the street, came to our side of the way, and, as on the previous evening, placed himself at the door. This time, without leaving the shop, I contrived to throw the letter to him, which he picked up, and then departed triumphantly. From that time, every morning and every evening he passed the shop. Matters went on thus until the following Sunday. With what impatience I awaited this happy hour! something whispered to me that on that day I should see Nicolas before Geneviève.

At length this Sunday, so ardently longed for, arrived. I dressed myself as becomingly as possible, and consulted my glass a long time, to convince myself that I should please. I was pretty, very pretty. The hour of our emancipation arrived. Madame Labille had gone early in the morning with her family to Versailles to see some fête. I let all my companions go out before me, and each was awaited in the street, one by a brother, another by an uncle, the third by a cousin. I went out the last, and scarcely set foot in the street when I looked about me on all sides. Nobody. I was walking by chance, and pensively, towards the Rue de la Ferronerie, when suddenly I heard behind me some one walking, who sighed. I stopped, turned round; it was Nicolas! He accosted me, and I passed with him all this happy and innocent day, and afterwards found opportunities of giving him many meetings. Our interviews were brief but delightful. I thought really that I was the happiest of women, and Nicolas obtained all from me. He owed this only to a true feeling, and I am certain he was not the less willing to marry me.

My companions and I became more familiar in proportion as we knew each other better; we then communicated mutually our loves and the names of our respective lovers. I blush even now when I think of the bursts of laughter which accompanied the name of Nicolas Mathon, a pastrycook's apprentice in the Rue Saint-Martin, at the sign of the *Bonne Foi*.

The contempt of these ladies was visibly expressed; they all had illustrious adorers. They were notaries' clerks, barristers' clerks, students or soldiers. They exclaimed loudly against the lowness of my taste. In vain did I defend my dear Nicolas, boast of his elegant figure, pleasing manners; nothing could stop their ridicule. They represented to me that, at the carnival, they would have an opportunity of going to a ball, but that my lover must not pretend to the honor of walking beside their gentlemen, and that I should see myself compelled to stay at home.

This, I confess, humbled me—me who had entered Geneviève's abode with such modest ideas! In my folly I disliked Nicolas, because he had not a gentlemanly air. I really think I would have bartered half my existence for him to have been a lawyer's clerk. Whilst these ideas were disturbing my brain, a *mousquetaire* entered the shop with much importance. I never saw any person more grand, more inflated, than the Comte d'Aubuisson, for that was the name of this hero, who, himself alone, made more noise than a whole regiment. His insolence, which I took for grandeur, had a prodigious effect upon me. He came to order the prompt completion of a hat for the Duchesse de Villeroi. The Comte d'Aubuisson was little, but well made, with a handsome face; not very bright in intellect, but perfectly satisfied with himself and all he did, considering himself as the most noble, most amiable and finest man of his day.

There was not one of the girls at Madame Labille's who did not desire to attract the *mousquetaire*. I had the honor to obtain the preference; he told me so, and that with so lofty an air that I dared not tell him that my heart was another's. My companions, irritated at my conquest, increased it in my eyes by their clumsy ridicule; they expressed their fears lest there should be a duel between the *mousquetaire* and the journeyman pastrycook. I only laughed at their jealousy, which I resolved to increase. Besides, how could I resist a *mousquetaire*, who perhaps sacrificed a duchess to me, perhaps ten, and as many countesses and marchionesses? Poor Nicolas was then forsaken. I forgot that with him an honorable marriage would crown our loves. Had I listened to

my heart it would have guided me wisely, but I abandoned myself to my vanity, and my vanity destroyed me.

As much as my first lover had endeavored to preserve my reputation, so much did the second aim at compromising it. He had neither peace nor rest until he had completely blazoned the affair to the whole world. I lent myself to all his whims; I went to see him at the quarters of the *mousquetaires,* and then he introduced me to his comrades, who congratulated him on the conquest of so pretty a girl. I know not what I did; my head was no longer my own. In vain did Madame Labille, who loved me sincerely, give me good advice; I listened to nothing, I would hear nothing; and no more attended to my good and prudent mother, whom my calumniators have accused in this particular. They are liars.

The Comte d'Aubuisson did not love me, and I found it out when it was too late to profit by it. I resolved, however, to show him that I had no more attachment to him than he had to me. I left him as I had found him, through vanity. There came to join the *mousquetaires* a young Biscayan. This young man, tall, and well made besides, with beautiful eyes, pale complexion, was so timid and so simple that his companions treated him with sovereign contempt. Well! it was on him that I cast my eyes to satisfy my vengeance. "There is no worse water," says the proverb, "than stagnant water." The proverb is correct. This *mousquetaire,* so cold in appearance, was ardent, bold. He saw that I wanted an avenger, and offered himself. I had reason to be content. Our connection was not lasting. My new lover having learnt the death of his father, was obliged to leave me. He was the third.

I know, my friend, that you are curious to know the history of my presentation at Versailles, wherefore I hasten on to that epoch. However, I cannot entirely pass over in silence the time which elapsed between the period of my youth and that of my entry at the Château. You must learn by what degradation I reached such a pitch of greatness; you may rely on it that I will glide over this part of my life as briefly as possible.

But before I continue my recital, allow me, my friend, to

pause one moment to cast a glance over the past, and not relinquish without a last regret that humble lover who never dreamed of having a King for his successor. Alas! with him the title of wife awaited me, the delights of a domestic life, in an obscure station certainly, but with an honored appellation, with unalloyed happiness, and free from remorse. My infidelity led me on from fault to fault to the lowest steps of the throne. I have seen at my feet a monarch and a crowd of courtiers. What glory! you will say. I was satisfied; but although I have sometimes been vain of it, I know not why, it seems to me that could I again become the little needle-woman of former days, and be enabled again to commence my career, I should not have the same ambition nor the same vanity. Do not be surprised at this species of contradiction in my mode of seeing and feeling: they are only the result of disgust and satiety. I have formerly felt precisely the same when on the eve of doing wrong; but I was young and foolish; I had no ear for good advice and good dictates. I quit my useless moralizing and return to my levity of heart and head and my faults, to continue the confidence I am reposing in you.

### III

THERE were then at Paris two charming sisters, the demoiselles Verriere. They bore the scepters of the highest gallantry, and, the better to ruin their adorers, they had gaming tables. Their salon was the meeting place, if not of the best, certainly of the most brilliant society. The great lords and rich financiers abounded at their house; and as handsome women are always in requisition where there are financiers and lords, I went to the house of the demoiselles Verriere.

It was in one of these houses that I met Jean du Barri, then known as the Comte de Serre. He had passed the freshness of first youth, and was about forty or five-and-forty, but, with his bad health and bad humor, might have been judged older. He was a man of good family, allied to all the first families of Gascoigne and Languedoc. He was not wealthy, and lived in that sort of aristocratic indigence so common in the provinces. The Comte de Serre had married

a wife of easy and respectable circumstances, but, induced by the liveliness of his passions and the desire of pushing his fortune, he had come to Paris, where, being without resources, he had incurred debts and paid them from the profits of the gaming table. On one side you would see a man of high temper, swearing like a trooper, taking coarseness for ease, a gambler, fond of women and wine, and regularly tipsy seven times a week. Reverse the coin and you find a generous heart, with a fine taste for the arts, a player but no blackleg (then of rare occurrence), opening his purse to whosoever needed it; and, on the least hint of a friend, ready to give the last sixpence. Such was my future brother-in-law.

Be that as it may, from our first interview he attained a powerful ascendancy over me; in vain did I seek to overcome it; I was really under the influence of a charm. The Comte Jean (by which title I shall in future designate him) thought me handsome, and proposed an unchained alliance of which he would defray all the expenses, and I was to enjoy all the pleasures. I accepted it. That independence to which I would formerly have sacrificed everything began to be irksome to me. I saw myself alone, without any protection in the world, and felt that I needed, to proceed on my way, the arm of some mature man to rest on, which would be my protection at any juncture.

IV

One morning comte Jean entered my apartment, his face beaming with delight.

"Read," said he, giving me a letter, "read, Jeannette: victory is ours. News from Morand. Lebel is coming to Paris, and will dine with us. Are we alone?"

"No, there are two of your countrymen whom you invited yesterday."

"I will write and put them off. Morand alone must dine with Lebel; he ought to have a place at the feast which he furnishes with such good music. Come, my dear girl, we touch the moment of importance, it is in your beauty and power of pleasing that I place all my hopes. I think I may rely on you; but, above all, do not forget that you are my sister-in-law."

"Brother-in-law," said I, laughing, "it is not unnecessary that I should know decidedly to which of your family I am married? The custom in France is not that a woman be the undivided property of three brothers."

"That only happens in Venice," replied the comte; "my brother Elie is too young, you must be the wife of Guillaume, my second brother."

"Very well; I am the comtesse Guillaume du Barry; that does famously well; we like to know whom we are married to."

After this conversation, comte Jean insisted on presiding at my toilette. He acquitted himself of the task, with a most laughable attention. During two good hours, at least, he tormented first Henriette, and then the female hairdresser, for I had not yet followed the mode, which began to be very general, of having my hair dressed by a man. Comte Jean passed alternately from my dressing-room to the kitchen. He knew Lebel was a gallant and a gourmand, and he was anxious to please him in all senses at once.

At one o'clock I was under arms, and prepared to receive him on whom my destiny depended. As soon as I reached the drawing-room, comte Jean compelled me to submit to the test of a rigid examination. His serious air amused me much as he gazed at me some time in solemn silence. At length his forehead relaxed, a smile of satisfaction played on his lips, and extending his arms to me, without venturing to touch me, "You are charming, divine," he said; "Lebel ought to go and hang himself if he does not fall down immediately at your knees."

Soon afterwards the folding-doors were hastily opened, and a servant announced M. Lebel, *premier de sa Majesté,* with M. Morand. The comte went to meet the arrivals, and as I now saw Lebel for the first time, he presented him to me formally.

"Sister, this is M. Lebel, *premier de sa Majesté,* who has done us the honor to come and dine with us."

"And he confers a real pleasure on us," said I, looking smilingly on M. Lebel. My look had its effect, for Lebel remained mute and motionless from admiration at my person. At length he stammered out a few incoherent words, which I

imagined to be compliments. The comte watched Lebel anxiously, and Morand began to rub his hands, saying:

"Well, sir, what think you of our celestial beauty?"

"She is worthy of a throne," replied Lebel, bending his head before me, and taking my hand, which he pressed respectfully to his lips. This reply was, perhaps, inadvertently made, but I took it as a good augury. "Yes," added Lebel, "you are the most lovely creature I ever met, though no one is more in the habit of seeing handsome females than myself."

"And of causing them to be seen by others," replied comte Jean.

This was an opening which was not followed up by Lebel. His first enthusiasm having passed, he measured me from head to foot, as if he would take an accurate description of my person.

For my part I began to support the looks of Lebel with more assurance. He was a man of no particular "mark or likelihood," but had made his way. Living at Versailles had given him a certain air of easy impertinence, but you could not discover anything distinguished in his manners, nothing which concealed his humble extraction. The direction of the *Parc aux Cerfs* gave him much influence with the king, who found the convenience of such a man, who was willing to take upon himself all the disagreeable part of his clandestine amours. His duties placed him in contact with the ministers, the lieutenant of police, and the comptroller-general. The highest nobility sought his friendship with avidity. They all had a wife, a sister, a daughter, whom they wished to make the favorite sultana; and for this it was necessary to get the ear of Lebel. Thus, under a libertine prince, the destinies of France were at the mercy of a *valet de chambre.*

I should tell you, however, that I never had occasion but to speak well of him, and that I have the utmost gratitude for all he did for me. The attachment he testified on our first meeting has never been altered. He gave me his protection as far as it was necessary for me, and when the favor of the king had accorded to me a station, whence all the court sought to hurl me, Lebel seconded me with all his power in my efforts to preserve it. I will say, that it is to his vigilance that I owe the overthrow of more than one conspiracy against

me. He was a warm and sincere friend, and not at all interested in the services he rendered. He did a great deal of good, as well as harm, in private. I know poor families whom he has assisted with his own purse, when he could obtain nothing for them from the king, for Louis was only prodigal in his pleasures.

However, we dined, and Lebel praised me incessantly to the very skies, and that with so much warmth, that I was fearful at one time he would fall in love with me himself, and would not resign me to another. Thank heaven, Lebel was a faithful servant.

After dinner, when we left the table, Lebel paid me some compliments; then pulling out his watch, he spoke of an appointment at the Marais, and left without saying a word of seeing us again.

At this abrupt departure, comte Jean and I looked at each other with astonishment. As for Morand, he was overjoyed.

"Well, comtesse," said he, "behold the number of your slaves increased by an illustrious adorer. You have made a conquest of M. Lebel, and I am certain he has gone away deeply smitten."

"I hope we shall see him again," said comte Jean.

"Do you doubt it?"

"Assure him," said I, "of the pleasure it will afford us to receive him as he merits."

Several persons entered, and M. Morand, profiting by the bustle which their entrance occasioned, approached me, and said, in a low tone,

"You are in possession of his heart, will you charge me with any message to him?"

"M. Morand," was my reply, "what are you thinking of? A woman of my rank throw herself at any person's head?"

"No, certainly not; but you can send him a kind word, or some affectionate token."

"I could not think of it; M. Lebel appeared to me a most agreeable man, and I shall be at all times delighted to see him."

Morand asked nothing more than this, and there our conversation ended.

Two days elapsed without being marked by any event.

Comte Jean had spent them with much anxiety. He was absent, when, on the third morning, Henriette came hastily into my room. "Madame," she said, "the *valet de chambre* of the king is in the drawing-room, and inquires if you will receive him."

At this news I was surprised and vexed. M. Lebel took me unawares; my toilette was not begun. I gave a hasty glance at my mirror, "Let M. Lebel come in"; and M. Lebel, who was on the heels of my maid, entered instantly. After having saluted me, he said,

"It is only you, Madame, whom one might thus surprise. Your beauty needs no ornament, your charms are decoration sufficient."

I replied to this compliment with (of course) much modesty, according to custom. We entered into conversation, and I found that Lebel really thought me the sister-in-law of comte Jean; and I remarked the involuntary respect that attended even his familiarity. I left him in his error, which was material to my interests. He talked to me some time of my attractions, of the part which a female like myself might assume in France. But fearing to compromise myself, I made no reply, but preserved the reserve which my character imposed upon me. I am not clever, my friend, I never could conduct an intrigue: I feared to speak or do wrong; and whilst I kept a tranquil appearance, I was internally agitated at the absence of comte Jean.

Fortune sent him to me. He was passing the street, when he saw at our door a carriage with the royal livery. Lebel always used it when his affairs did not demand a positive incognito. This equipage made him suspect a visit from Lebel, and he came in opportunely to extricate me from my embarrassment.

"Sir," said Lebel to him, when he entered, "here is the lady whose extreme modesty refuses to listen to what I dare not thus explain to her."

"Is it anything I may hear for her?" said the comte, with a smiling air.

"Yes, I am the ambassador of a mighty power: you are the minister plenipotentiary of the lady, and with your leave, we will go into your private room to discuss the articles of

the secret treaty which I have been charged to propose to you. What says madame?"

"I consent to anything that may come from such an ambassador."

Comte Jean instantly led him into another room, and when they were alone, Lebel said to him, "Do you know that your sister-in-law is a most fascinating creature? She has occupied my thoughts since I have known her, and in my enthusiasm I could not help speaking of her in a certain quarter. So highly have I eulogized her, that his majesty desires an interview with her, that he may judge with his own eyes if I am an appreciator of beauty."

At these words comte Jean felt a momentary agitation, but soon recovering himself, he replied:

"I am exceedingly obliged to you, sir, for the favorable disposition you have evinced towards the comtesse du Barry. She and I have as much respect as love for his majesty; but my sister-in-law has not been presented, and, consequently, I can scarcely see how she can be allowed to pay her respects to his majesty."

"Do not let that disturb you; it is not intended that she shall go and partake of the magnificence of Versailles, but be admitted to an intimacy much more flattering. Would you refuse to grant him that pleasure?"

"It would be a crime of *lèse-majesté,*" said the comte Jean, laughing, "and my family have too much respect for their monarch. We should not be content with a fugitive favor."

"You may expect everything from the charms of the comtesse; I am certain they will have the utmost success; but for me, I can give you no guarantee. You must run the chance."

"Your protection, however, is the only thing which encourages my sister-in-law in this affair. But tell me when is this meeting to take place?"

"Instantly. The king is impatient to see the comtesse, and I have promised that she will sup with him to-morrow evening in my apartment at Versailles."

"How is she to be introduced to the king?"

"I am to entertain four of my friends."

"Who are they?"

"First, the baron de Gonesse."

"Who is he?"
"The king himself."
"Well, who next?"
"The duc de Richelieu."
"Who else?"
"The marquis de Chauvelin."
"Well?"
"The duc de la Vauguyon."
"What, the devotee?"
"The hypocrite. But never mind: the main point is, that you must not appear to recognize the king. Instruct your sister-in-law to this effect."
"Certainly; if she must sin, she had better do so with some reason."

While these gentlemen were thus disposing of me, what was I doing? Alone, in my room, I waited the result of their conference with mortal impatience. The character I had to play was a superb one, and at the moment I was about to enter on the stage, I felt all the difficulties of my part. I feared I should not succeed, but fail amid the insulting hisses of the Versailles party.

My fears at once disappeared, and then I pictured myself sitting on a throne, magnificently attired; my imagination wandered in all the enchantments of greatness;—then, as if from remorse, I recalled my past life. The former lover of Nicolas blushed before the future mistress of Louis XV. A thousand different reflections crowded upon me, and mingled in my brain. If to live is to think, I lived a whole age in one quarter of an hour. At length I heard some doors open, a carriage rolled away, and comte Jean entered my chamber.

"Victory!" cried he, embracing me with transport. "Victory! my dear Jeanne, to-morrow you sup with the king."

On this information I turned pale, my strength forsook me, and I was compelled to sit down, or rather to fall into a chair; for, according to Jean Jacques Rousseau, my legs shook under me (*flageolaient*). This, however, was the only movement of weakness which I betrayed. When I recovered a little, the comte Jean told me the conversation he had had with Lebel. I joked about the title of baron de Gonesse, and

I promised to treat the king as if ignorant of his incognito. One thing only made me uneasy, and that was supping with the duc de Richelieu, who had seen me before at madame de Lagarde's; but the idea that he would not remember me gave me renewed courage.

On so important an occasion, comte Jean did not forget to repeat his instructions over again. These are nearly his words, for I think I learnt them by heart.

"Remember that it is on your first interview that your safety depends. Let him learn, through you, those utter tendernesses which have been sought for him in vain heretofore. He is like the monarch of old, who was willing to pay the half of his crown for an unknown pleasure. Lebel is wearied in seeking every week for new fruit. He is quite disposed to serve you, and will second you in the best manner. You are about to become the center of attraction to all courtiers, and noble *courtisanes*. You must expect that they will endeavor to cry you down, because you will have carried off from them a gem to which every family has its pretensions. You must at first stand firmly before the storm, but afterward you will find all enlist themselves under your banner, who have no wife, sister, nor daughter; that is, all who have no mistress to offer to the king. You must attach these to you by place and favor: they must be first thought of, and then you must think of yourself and me, my dear girl."

"All this is well enough," I replied, "but as yet I am nothing."

"*Morbleu!* to-morrow you will be everything," cried comte Jean, with his determined energy. "But we must think about this to-morrow. Make haste, noble comtesse; go to all the milliners, seek what is elegant rather than what is rich. Be as lovely, pleasing and gay as possible; this is the main point, and God will do all the rest."

He pronounced this blasphemy in a laughing tone, and I confess I could not help joining heartily in the laugh.

## V

At length, we set out according to our agreement with Lebel; I was closely muffled up in my large *calèche*—the carriage rolled along till we reached Versailles, where we had for the

last month engaged a lodging, which might be useful to us in all events; we alighted, and after vainly seeking a few moments' repose, proceeded on foot to Lebel, in whose apartments we were to attire ourselves in a suitable manner.

"Ah, madame!" cried he, "I began to fear you might not come, you have been looked for with an impatience—"

"Which can hardly equal mine," interrupted I; "for you were prepared for your visitor, whilst I have yet to learn who is the friend that so kindly desires to see me."

"It is better it should be so," added Lebel; "do not seek either to guess or discover more, than that you will here meet with some cheerful society, friends of mine, who will sup at my house, but with whom circumstances prevent my sitting down at table."

"How!" said I, with affected surprise, "not sup with us?"

"Even so," replied Lebel; and then added with a laugh, "*He* and I sit down to supper together! What an idea! No! you will find that just as the guests are about to sit down at table, I shall suddenly be called out of the room, and shall only return at the close of the repast."

All this was but of small import to me. Nevertheless, I affected to regret the unavoidable absence of Lebel. In fact, I believe that the first breath inspired at court is fraught with falsehood and deceit, entirely destructive to every feeling of natural candor.

Lebel, with the most ceremonious gallantry, conducted me to a private dressing-room, where I found several females waiting to assist me at my toilet; I abandoned myself to their cares, which were, indeed, most skillfully exercised in my behalf. They wrought wonders in my appearance, bathing me after the Eastern fashion, adorning my hair and person, till I came forth from their hands more blooming and beauteous than an houri.

When I returned to the room in which Lebel was expecting me, his surprise was almost overpowering.

"You are, indeed," exclaimed he, "the new sun which is to rise upon Versailles."

Immediately after this, Lebel conducted me into the salon; then he was called away, and quitted us. The king rose and approached me, saluting me with the most admirable gal-

lantry, and addressing to me the most encouraging and gratifying words. His gentle, yet polished manners, his fine countenance, noble air, and the free and unrestrained glances of admiration which sparkled in his eyes, communicated to me a feeling of support and confidence which effectually reassured me, and roused me from the involuntary emotion I had felt at the moment when I first appeared in his presence. The king addressed a few words to comte Jean, and then regarded him steadily, as though he were trying to recall his features; but his eye quickly turned on me again, upon whom he bestowed the most intoxicating attention. He presented me to the three courtiers who accompanied him. Never was first sight more effective, and never did a flame so rapidly increase as did the passion of my noble adorer. Ere we had seated ourselves at the supper-table, he was ages gone in love.

It would have provoked a smile from any countenance to perceive how the respect and admiration with which the three courtiers regarded me increased in proportion as the sentiments of the king towards me betrayed themselves more and more. At first I had been considered as a person of little or no importance. Soon, however, as their sagacious eyes discovered the state of their master's mind, the air of familiarity with which they had regarded me gave place to a more studied politeness, which, in its turn, as matters progressed, was superseded by the most delicate attention; and ere we rose from table these gentlemen watched my looks with the most eager anxiety to obtain the honor of my notice, and hopes of future patronage from one whom they easily foresaw would be fully qualified to bestow it. Comte Jean observed all that was passing in profound silence. As for me, I talked and laughed with perfect freedom from restraint, and my frank unaffected mirth appeared to enchant the king; I knew that he was weary of the nice formalities of courtly beauty, and desired to refresh his eyes and ears with something less refined, and I gratified him to his heart's wish. The conversation became lively and animated, the merits of men of letters were discussed, the French and Italian theater passed in review before us, and finally, we amused ourselves with anecdotes relative to the intrigues of court. The baron de Gonesse related to us a circumstance which had just been communi-

cated to him by a county magistrate. I must here apprize the reader that these administrators of justice were directed to collect all the facts, scandalous, horrible, ridiculous, or piquant, which occurred within their jurisdiction, in order that, being forwarded to the king, they might aid in distracting his mind from the heavy cares of government. Alas! how many strange and eventful things have I since learned by similar channels.

The supper terminated, the king's friends remained some time conversing with us. Whilst these noblemen were busily celebrating my praises in words sufficiently loud to reach the king's ear, the baron de Gonesse, standing by my side, was prosecuting his suit in the most ardent terms. I received his overtures with becoming grace and modesty. As I have before said, the exterior of the king was very prepossessing, and what he wanted in youth, he made up by all the mature graces of dignified royalty. At last Lebel appeared, and made me a sign to rise from my seat. Up to this period nothing had arisen to betray the incognito of the august monarch, and in order to keep up my pretended ignorance of his grandeur, I quitted the apartment with little ceremony. Lebel conducted me to an adjoining chamber, furnished with the utmost magnificence. When we were seated, he turned to the comte Jean, who had followed us, and said, "It rests with yourself whether you will return to Paris, or remain at Versailles. But as for *milady,* who seems much fatigued, she will, we trust, honor us by accepting a bed at the castle."

My self-created brother-in-law understood as well as I did the significance of these words, and clearly read in their import how far I had attracted the favor of the king. In order to have rendered the impression more lasting, we could have wished that matters had been less precipitated, but we were under a roof where everything yielded to the caprices of its master, and resignation to his will became a matter of course. And here I trust I may be pardoned if I pass over certain details which could not, at this lapse of time, interest or amuse any one; besides, although I have found no difficulty in reciting former events of my life, I find my pen more prudish and coy than were my ears or mouth. All I shall say is, that

the following day, as soon as I was left alone in my chamber, Lebel entered, and prostrating himself at the side of my bed,—

"Madame la comtesse," said he, "is queen and mistress here. Not only has your noble lover failed to communicate to me the usual signal of disgust or dislike, but he has spoken of you to me in the most favorable light, declaring, that, for the first time in his life, he felt the influence of a true and sincere affection; for this reason he desired I would not convey to you the contents of this casket, as originally intended."

"And what does it contain?" asked I, with childish eagerness.

"Oh, a trifle unworthy of her who is now the mistress of his warmest love; only a purse containing a hundred louis, and a suit of emeralds worth a similar sum. He bade me say it might have served to recompense a mere fleeting fancy, but that it is unworthy of your charms, nor can he insult you by the offer of it."

"Will he then see me again?" inquired I.

"To-morrow evening, if agreeable to you."

"Only say that his wishes are mine."

"Would you wish to see the comte Jean before you rise? He has been waiting with the utmost impatience to see you since seven o'clock this morning."

"Let him come in."

The comte entered, and I saw by the triumphant joy painted on his face, that Lebel had told him of the propitious state of things. He ran up to me with outstretched arms, congratulating me upon my success, and putting at the same time several questions, to which, either from mere womanly caprice, or presuming upon my recent elevation to the character of prime favorite, I refused to reply.

My folly drew down on me his severe anger, and several oaths escaped his lips, which, echoed back by walls so unused to similar violence, struck Lebel with terror. That faithful ally placed his hand over his mouth, imploring of him to recollect himself, and the place he was in. As for me, dreading some foolish burst of his impetuosity, I tried some of my sweetest smiles, and inviting him to sit beside me, related

to him and Lebel those particulars which my pen refuses to retrace. Amongst other things, I told them I had said to the king, that I had perfectly known who he was all the preceding evening when supping with him, and that he had the simplicity to say he was surprised I had not appeared more embarrassed in his presence.

Our conversation terminated, I wished to return to Paris, and I was, without further hindrance, allowed to depart. Scarcely had I arrived there an hour, than I received from his majesty a magnificent diamond agraffe, worth at least 60,000 francs, and bank notes to the amount of 200,000 livres.

Comte Jean and myself were well nigh stupefied with astonishment at the sight of such treasures; to us, who had never in our lives possessed such sums, they appeared inexhaustible. My brother-in-law divided them into two equal portions, one of which he put into his pocket, and the other into my *escritoire.* With this arrangement I did not interfere; nothing seemed to me more simple than that he should satisfy his need out of my superfluity. I bestowed two thousand crowns upon Henriette, and expended in the course of the day at least a quarter of my riches in trifles, as unnecessary as useless; and all this without once remembering that as I owed my present abundance to a momentary inclination on the part of the king, so the turn of an hour, or a fresh fancy on the part of my munificent adorer, might reduce me to the unprovided state in which I had been so lately. That evening was passed *tête-à-tête* with comte Jean; he thought, as I did, that the foundation of our treasure was firm as a rock, and he gave me many counsels for the future which I promised to observe; for indeed it was to my own interest to do so. Upon how many follies did we then debate, which, but a few days afterwards we found practicable. The different ministers passed in review before us; some we determined upon retaining, whilst others were dismissed, and already I began in idea to act with sovereign power over these illustrious personages, amongst whom I anticipated shortly playing so important a part. "After all," said I, "the world is but an amusing theater, and I see no reason why a pretty woman should not play a principal part in it."

VI

EARLY the following day I received a message from the king, accompanied with a bouquet of flowers tied round with a string of diamonds. A short letter was annexed to this splendid gift, which I would transcribe here, had it not been taken from me with many others. My reply, which I wrote upon the spur of the moment, was concise, and, as I preserved the rough copy, under the impression of its being one day useful, I can give the reader the exact words.

"The billet traced by your noble hands, renders me the happiest of women. My joy is beyond description. Thanks, monsieur le Baron, for your charming flowers. Alas! they will be faded and withered by to-morrow, but not so fleeting and short-lived are the sentiments with which you have inspired me. Believe me, the desire you express to see me again is entirely mutual; and in the impatience with which you await our next interview, I read but my own sentiments. The ardor with which you long to embrace me, is fully equaled by the affection which leads me to desire no gratification greater than that of passing my whole life in your society. Adieu, monsieur le baron; you have forbidden my addressing you as your rank and my respect would have me, I will therefore content myself with assuring you of the ardent affection of the

"COMTESSE DU BARRY."

The signature I adopted was a bold piece of falsehood, but it was too late to recede; besides, I was addressing myself in my letter, not to the king, but to the baron de Gonesse; for Louis, by I know not what unaccountable caprice, seemed to wish to preserve his incognito. I have since learned that Francis I. assumed the same name, although upon a very different occasion. Replying to a letter from Charles V., in which that emperor had given himself a long string of high sounding titles, he contented himself with simply signing his letter, *"François, baron de Gonesse."* Louis XV. was very fond of borrowed appellations. Unlike the vanity so common to mankind, of seeking to set off their pretensions by assumed titles, it is the pleasure of royalty to descend to a lower grade in society when concealment becomes desirable, either from

policy or pleasure; and Louis sought in the familiarity in which a plain baron might safely indulge, a relief from the ennui attendant upon the rigid etiquette of a regal state. I had omitted in my letter to the baron, to remind him that we were to meet that very evening, but that did not prevent my repairing to Versailles punctually at the appointed hour. I was conducted into the same apartment as before, where I found the same females who had then assisted at my toilette again prepared to lend their aid; and from this moment I had a regular establishment of attendants appointed for my use.

The moment the king was informed of my arrival, unable to restrain his impatience, he hastened to me to assist at my dressing table, and he continued standing beside me so long as the operation lasted; I felt greatly embarrassed, not knowing whether I durst take the liberty of requesting him to be seated. However, my silence on the subject was greatly admired, and ascribed to my perfect acquaintance with polished life, when in reality it originated from mere timidity. My triumph was complete; the monarch smiled at and admired every word as it fell from my lips, kissed my hands, and played with the curls of my long hair, sportively twisting his fingers amidst my flowing ringlets with all the vivacity of a lover of twenty. The company upon this evening was different from that of the former occasion, consisting of the duc de Duras, first gentleman of the bedchamber, and the duc d'Ayen, who had the reputation of being a great wit; however, in my opinion, he was much more deserving the character of a real fiend; his very breath was poisonous, and his touch venomous as the bite of an adder. I well remember what M. de Fleury said of him to the king in my presence. "Sire," said he, "the thing I most dread in the world next to a bite from M. d'Ayen, is the bite of a mad dog." For my own part, I did not in the end look upon him with less terror, and well he paid me for my fears. Upon one occasion, when the king was speaking of me to him, he said, "I am well aware that I succeed St. Foix."

"Yes, sire"; replied the duke, "in the same manner as your majesty succeeds Pharamond!"

I never forgave him those words, dictated by a fiendish

malice. However, upon the evening of my first introduction to him, he behaved to me with the most marked politeness. I was then an object of no consequence to his interests, and his vision had not yet revealed to him the height I was destined to attain. He looked upon me but as one of those meteors which sparkled and shone in the castle at Versailles for twenty-four hours, and sank to rise no more.

The duc de Duras was not an ill-disposed person, but inconceivably stupid; indeed, wit was by no means a family inheritance. Both father and son, good sort of people in other respects, were forever saying or doing some good thing in support of their reputation for stupidity at court. One day the king quite jokingly inquired of the duc de Duras, what was done with the old moons. "Upon my word, sire," replied he, "I can give you no idea, never having seen, but with your majesty's permission, I will endeavor to learn from M. de Cassini!" To such a pitch did the poor man's simplicity extend. Both father and son were nominated to attend the king of Denmark, when on his road to visit France. The king observed to a person who repeated it to me: "The French are generally styled a clever, witty nation; I cannot say I should ever have been able to discover it, had I been tempted to form my opinion from the specimen they have sent me."

As far as I am concerned, after saying so many unfavorable things of the Messrs. de Duras, I must do them the justice to say, that their conduct towards me was everything that could be desired. I was always glad to see them; it gave my own imagination a sort of sedative dose to converse with these two simple-minded beings, whose interests I was always ready to promote by every means in my power, and I trust the memory of what I have done will be long remembered by the noble house of Duras.

The supper did not pass off so gayly as the former one. The duc de Duras spoke as little as possible, in the dread of making some unlucky speech, and the duc d'Ayen sat devouring the spleen he could not give vent to, and meditating fresh objects upon whom to exercise his malignity; he vainly endeavored to lead me on to make some ridiculous observation, but without success; happily for him, the king did not

perceive his aim. My royal lover was indeed so entirely engrossed by me, that he lost all the duke's maneuvers; his transports appeared too much for his senses to sustain, and he vowed that I should never quit him more, but remain to be elevated by his power to the first place at court. At the monarch's sign, the two guests withdrew.

When the duc d'Ayen quitted the room, "That nobleman is by no means to my taste," said I to the king, "he has the air of a spy, who wishes me no good."

"Do you really think so, my lovely comtesse?"

"I am certain of it; and I already shudder at the bare anticipation of an enemy having access to your majesty's ear."

"Reassure yourself," said the king, with the utmost tenderness, "in me you have a sure defender, who will never forsake you; look upon me from this minute as your natural protector, and woe to him on whose head your displeasure shall fall."

After this conversation the king and myself retired to rest, and when he quitted me in the morning, he entreated me not to return to Paris, but to give him my company for a whole week. Lebel made his appearance to beg I would consider myself mistress of the apartments I occupied, and that he had received orders to provide me with an establishment upon the most handsome scale.

That very day Henriette, whom I had sent for, and instituted as my head waiting-woman, informed me, that an old gentleman, attired as though for a grand gala, but who refused to send in his name, begged to be permitted to pay his respects. I bade her admit him; it was the duc de Richelieu.

"Madame la comtesse," said he, bowing low, "I come to complain of your want of condescension; unless, indeed, your memory has been at fault. Was it possible that when I had the honor of supping with you the other night, you did not recollect your former old friend?"

"If, indeed, my forgetfulness were a fault, monsieur le maréchal, it was one in which you bore an equal share; you were not more forward than myself in displaying marks of recognition."

"That arose only from the dazzling increase of your

beauty. You were but a nymph when last my eyes had beheld you, and now you are matured into a goddess."

The duke then made some slight allusion to the family of madame Lagarde, but guessing with his admirable tact, that such reminiscences could not be particularly agreeable to me, he dexterously turned the conversation, by requesting permission to present to me his nephew, the duc d'Aiguillon, that he might leave a worthy substitute and champion near the king when state affairs called him into Gascony; he craved my kind offices to obtain the intimate acquaintance of comte Jean. They were subsequently at daggers drawn with each other, but this haughty overbearing lord conducted himself at first with the most abject servility. The third favor he had to solicit was that I would name him to the king as frequently as opportunities occurred to form one of our supper parties. All this I engaged to do, nor indeed could I refuse after the violent protestations of friendship he made me.

"You will, ere long," said he, "see the whole court at your feet, but beware of considering them all as your friends; have a care, above all, of the duchesse de Grammont. She has been long endeavoring to obtain the king's affections, and she will see with hatred and fury another more worthy engrossing the place she has so vainly contended for; she and her impertinent brother will call in the aid of the devil himself to dispossess you of your elevated seat; you are lost if you do not twist both their necks."

"How, monsieur le maréchal, shall I mark my career by a murder?"

"You take me too literally; I only mean that in your place I would not be at the trouble of keeping any terms with them."

"Ah, monsieur le duc, I understand you now; yet it seems a bad augury to have to begin my reign by cabals and intrigues."

"Alas! my fair comtesse, you are too good, too guileless for a court life; between ourselves we are all hypocrites more or less; mistrust every one, even those who make the finest protestations."

"In that case the first object of my suspicion would be my old and esteemed friend the maréchal de Richelieu."

"Ah, madame! this is not fair usage, thus to turn my weapons against myself, and to fight me with my own arms."

Upon this the duke quitted me, and scarcely had he left the room, when the duc la Vauguyon entered. This gentleman offered me no advice; he contented himself by styling the Jesuits his "very good friends," and continually turning the conversation upon their merits. I allowed him to express his attachment, without interruption, for these disagreeable men, whom I determined in my own mind to have nothing to do with, recollecting all I had heard of their dislike to our sex. After an hour passed in amusing talk, the duc de la Vauguyon retired, well pleased with his visit, and his place was immediately supplied by comte Jean, to whom I communicated all that had passed between my late visitors and myself.

"For heaven's sake," said he, "let us not be the dupes of these great lords; before we range ourselves under the banners of either of them let us secure our own footing; let us wait till you are presented."

"But, my good friend, I must be a married lady to obtain that honor."

"And so you will be shortly, do not be uneasy about that. I have written to my brother William to set out without delay for Paris. Your swain will be easily induced to marry you. What do you think of that?"

I gave comte Jean to comprehend, by signs, that I left my destiny in his hands, and he kissed my hands and withdrew. The king managed to steal a few minutes to converse with me.

"You did not intrust me, my sweet friend," said he, "with the circumstance of your having formerly known the duc de Richelieu; less reserved on the subject than you were, he told me he had seen you at the house of madame Lagarde, who considered you one of her dearest friends."

"Sire," replied I, "I was too much occupied with your majesty, to think of any other person in the world."

My answer delighted him, he looked at me in the most gracious manner.

"You would almost persuade me that you love me," said he, smiling.

"Indeed, your majesty," said I, "I only pray that you desire the continuance of my affection."

"In that case," replied he, kissing my hand with fervor, "you do but partake of my tenderness for you."

These words flattered my vanity, and here I must declare that if I never felt for the king that violent attachment which is termed love, I ever entertained for him the warmest esteem. He was so attentive, so kind to me, that I must have been a monster of ingratitude could I have looked upon him with indifference.

Our supper on this night was again lively as the first had been. The duc de Richelieu entertained us with several amusing anecdotes; not that they contained anything very piquant, but the duke related them well, and we were all in the humor to be pleased, and laughed heartily at what he said. Comte Jean, whose eye constantly followed me, appeared perfectly satisfied with all I said or did. As for the king, he seemed enchanted with me, and seemed wholly occupied in watching my looks, that he might anticipate my wants. After supper, in the *tête-à-tête* which followed, he explained himself in terms which left me no doubt how securely my empire over him was established. Had he been less explicit on the subject, the flattering marks of favor, and the adulatory compliments I received from all on the following day, would well have assured me of it. I was no longer an obscure and friendless individual, but the beloved mistress of the king; I was, to use the expression of Lebel, a new sun which had arisen to illumine the horizon of Versailles. I could no longer doubt my power when I saw noble personages present themselves to solicit the most servile employments about my person. Amongst others, I might instance a certain lady de St. Benoit, who continued first lady of my chamber, during the whole time of my regency;—my justly-valued Henriette being contented to take the second place of honor.

## VII

In the midst of this cross-fire of intrigues, one was devised against me which might have terminated in my ruin; but, thanks to the indefatigable activity of comte Jean, only

served to fix me more firmly in my situation. Lebel came to me one day: his face was sad, and his look serious. By his manner I augured that my reign had passed, and that I must quit my post. I awaited what he should say with mortal impatience. At length he began thus:

"Madame, you have many bitter enemies, who are laboring to effect your ruin with a blood-thirstiness which nothing can assuage. They have now spread a report that you are not married. This infamous calumny——"

"Ah, is that all?" said I with joy; "no, my dear Lebel, this time they do not calumniate me. The worthy creatures for once are right."

"What," said Lebel, in a tone of alarm almost comic, "what, are you really not married?"

"No."

"Are you not the wife of the comte Guillaume du Barry?"

"No."

"Then you have deceived the king, and played with me."

"Lebel, my friend, take another tone. No one has any right to complain. You have given me to the king as a person to please him; I do so. The rest can be no matter of yours."

"Pardon me, madame; it is a matter of the greatest consequence to me. I am terribly compromised in this affair, and you with me."

Lebel told me that the duchesse de Grammont had begged him to call upon her, and had bitterly reproached him about the mistress he had procured for the king: the duchesse affirmed that I was a nameless and unmarried creature; and added, that it was his duty to make the king acquainted with these particulars, unless I, the pretended wife of du Barry, would consent to go to England when a large pension should be assured to me.

"No, my dear Lebel, I will not go to England; I will remain in France, at Versailles, at the château. If I am not married I will be; the thing is easily managed."

Lebel somewhat assured, begged me to send for comte Jean, and when he came he (Lebel) recommenced his tale of grief.

"You are drowning yourself in a glass of water," said my future brother-in-law to him, beginning to treat him with

less ceremony; "go back to the duchesse de Grammont, and tell her that madame was married at Toulouse. She will have an inquiry set on foot; in the meanwhile my brother will arrive, and the marriage will take place. Then we will show the rebels a real comtesse du Barry; and whether my sister-in-law be a lady of six months' standing or only of yesterday, that is of no consequence to the king of France."

After this conversation Lebel delivered the message to the duchesse de Grammont, who told him that she should write to Toulouse to the attorney-general. This was what the comte Jean wished and he was prepared for her.

But, you will say to me, was it certain that your asserted husband would marry you? Were there no difficulties to fear? None. Comte Guillaume was poor, talented, and ambitious; he liked high living, and would have sold himself to the devil for riches. He was happy in marrying me. Comte Jean would not have ventured such a proposal to his other brother, the comte d'Hargicourt, who had much good sense and great notions of propriety, and who at Versailles was called the *honnête homme;* a distinction not over flattering to his two brothers.

The same evening the whole family arrived, and was presented to me the next day. My two future sisters-in-law frightened me at first with their provincial manners and southern accent; but, after a few minutes, I found that this Gascon pronunciation had many charms with it. Mesdemoiselles du Barry were not handsome but very agreeable. One was called Isabelle, whom they had nicknamed *Bischi,* the other's name was Fanchon, and her name had been abbreviated to *Chon.* The latter had much talent, and even brought to Versailles with her an instinctive spirit of diplomacy which would have done honor to a practiced courtier. She would have been thought simple, unsophisticated, and yet was full of plot and cunning.

I was soon much pleased with her, and the king became equally so. He was always very much amused at hearing her talk *patois* (provincially), or recite the verses of one Gondouli, a poet of Languedoc. He used to make her jump upon his knees; and although she had passed the first bloom of youth, he played with her like a child. But what most par-

ticularly diverted the king, was calling my sister-in-law by her nickname; "*Petite Chon, grande Chon,*" he was always saying, "do this, go there, come here." Louis XV. did the same with his own daughters: he had amongst them a *Loque,* a *Graille,* a *Chiffe,* and they were the ladies Victoire, Adélaïde, and Sophie, whom he thus elegantly designated. I so soon saw the taste of the king for nicknames that I gave him one, it was *Lafrance.* So far from being angry with me, he laughed to tears every time that I called him so. I will only justify myself by saying, that if I expressed myself coarsely it was not in consequence of my vulgar education, but because the king liked such modes of expression.

Let me revert to my marriage, which was performed secretly at the parish of Saint Laurent. I believe the king knew of it, although he never alluded to it any more than myself. Thus the malice of my enemies was completely balked in this affair. Some days afterwards comte Jean received a letter from the attorney-general of the parliament of Toulouse, M. the marquis de Bonrepos-Riquet. This gentleman informed my brother-in-law that he had been applied to, to institute an inquiry at all the notaries, and amongst all the registers of the parishes for the proof of my marriage; that he warned us to be on our guard, and that whatever diligence he might be desired to employ, he should do nothing without informing us. We felt the obligation of this proceeding, and my brother-in-law thanked the attorney-general in my name as well as in his own. He told him that it was not at Toulouse that the parties interested should make their researches for my marriage certificate, but at Paris, either at the parish church of Saint Laurent, or at the notary's, Lepot d'Auteuil. M. de Bonrepos gave part of this reply to the duchesse de Grammont. Great was the bustle amongst the Choiseuls! I leave you to judge of the fury of the lady or ladies, for the comtesse de Grammont was no less irritated than the other, always prepossessed with the idea, that to please the king was to wrong their family. The comtesse de Grammont had not half the talent of the duchesse, she had only her faults. She showed herself so rude and impertinent towards me, that I was at length compelled, not to exile her of my own accord, but to allow that she should be so served.

But I anticipate, for this did not occur until the following year.

The king by all his kindnesses endeavored to recompense me for these attacks: he appeared charmed to see me surrounded by my husband's family. He placed amongst the pages the vicomte Adolphe du Barry, son of comte Jean, a young man of great promise, but whose destiny was so brief and so unfortunate. My husband's family testified much affection for me, as did the duc d'Aiguillon, to whom I daily attached myself. He carefully kept from me all that could give me pain, and took a thousand precautions that no unpleasant reports should reach me. If we passed a short time without meeting he wrote to me, and I confess I was delighted with a correspondence which formed my own style. Mademoiselle Chon, my sister-in-law, and I also wrote to each other, and that from one room to another. I remember that one day, having broken a glass of rock crystal which she had given me, I announced my misfortune in such solemn style, and with so well feigned a tone of chagrin, that the letter amused the whole family. The king saw it, and was so much pleased that he kept it, and next day sent me a golden goblet enriched with stones, which I gave to Chon, to whom it rightfully belonged.

## VIII

Spite of the little estimation in which I held men of letters, generally speaking, you must not take it for granted that I entertained an equal indifference for all these gentlemen. I have now to speak of the admiration with which the illustrious Jean Jacques Rousseau inspired me; the man who, after a life so filled with constant trouble and misfortunes, died a few years since in so deplorable a manner. At the period of which I am now speaking this man, who had filled Europe with his fame, was living at Paris, in a state bordering upon indigence. I must here mention, that it was owing to my solicitation that he had been permitted to return from his exile, I having successfully interceded for him with the chancellor and the attorney-general. M. Seguier made no difficulty to my request, because he looked upon Jean Jacques Rousseau as the greatest enemy to a set of men whom he mor-

tally hated—the philosophers. Neither did M. de Maupeou, from the moment he effected the overthrow of the parliament, see any objection to bestowing his protection upon a man whom the parliaments had exiled. In this manner, therefore, without his being aware of it, Rousseau owed to me the permission to reënter Paris. Spite of the mortifying terms in which this celebrated writer had spoken of the king's mistresses, I had a lively curiosity to know him; all that his enemies repeated of his uncouthness, and even of his malicious nature, far from weakening the powerful interest with which he inspired me, rather augmented it, by strengthening the idea I had previously formed of his having been greatly calumniated. The generous vengeance which he had recently taken for the injuries he had received from Voltaire particularly charmed me.[1] I thought only how I could effect my design of seeing him by one means or another, and in this resolution I was confirmed by an accident which befell me one day.

It was the commencement of April, 1771, I was reading for the fourth time, the *"Nouvelle Héloïse,"* and for the tenth, or, probably, twelfth, the account of the party on the lake, when the maréchale de Mirepoix entered the room. I laid my open volume on the mantel-piece, and the maréchale, glancing her eye upon the book I had just put down, smilingly begged my pardon for disturbing my grave studies, and taking it in her hand, exclaimed,

"Ah! I see you have been perusing *'La Nouvelle Héloïse';* I have just been having more than an hour's conversation respecting its author."

"What were you saying of him?" asked I.

"Why, my dear, I happened to be at the house of madame de Luxembourg, where I met with tne comtesse de Boufflers."

"Yes, I remember," said I, "the former of these ladies was the particular friend of Jean Jacques Rousseau."

"And the second also," answered she; "and I can promise you, that neither the one nor the other spoke too well of him."

"Is it possible?" exclaimed I, with a warmth I could not repress.

[1] Jean Jacques Rousseau in his journey through Lyons in June, 1770, subscribed for the statue of Voltaire.

"The duchess," resumed madame de Mirepoix, "says he is an ill-bred and ungrateful man, and the countess insists upon it he is a downright pedant."

"Shameful, indeed," cried I; "but can you, my dear friend, account for the ill-nature with which these ladies speak of poor Rousseau?"

"Oh! yes," replied the maréchale, "their motives are easily explained; and I will tell you a little secret, for the truth of which I can vouch. Madame de Luxembourg had at one time, it has been said, conceived the most lively passion for Jean Jacques."

"Indeed!" cried I; "and he——"

"Did not return it. As for madame de Boufflers, the case was exactly reversed; and Rousseau has excited her resentment by daring long to nurse a hopeless flame, of which she was the object: this presumption on the part of the poet our dignified countess could never pardon. However, I entreat of you not to repeat this; remember, I tell you in strictest secrecy."

"Oh, be assured of my discretion," said I; "I promise you not to publish your secret" (which, by the way, I was very certain was not communicated for the first time when told to me).

This confidence on the part of the maréchale had, in some unaccountable manner, only increased the ardent desire I felt to see the author of the *"Nouvelle Héloïse";* and I observed to madame de Mirepoix, that I had a great curiosity to be introduced to Rousseau.

"I fear," said she, "you will never be able to persuade him to visit at the château."

"How then can I accomplish my desire of seeing this celebrated man?"

"By one simple method; if he will not come to you, you must go to him. I would willingly accompany you, but he knows me, and my presence would spoil all. The best thing you can do is to dress yourself quite plainly, as a lady from the country, taking with you one of your female attendants. You may take as a pretext for your visit some music you would wish to have copied. Be sure to treat M. de Rousseau as a mere copyist, and appear never to have heard of his

superior merit: do this, and you will receive the best possible reception."

I greatly approved of the maréchale's advice, which I assured her I would delay no longer than till the following day to put into practice; and, after some further conversation upon J. J. Rousseau, we parted.

Early the next day I set out for Paris accompanied by Henriette; there, in pursuance of the suggestion of madame de Mirepoix, I dressed myself as a person recently arrived from the country, and Henriette, who was to accompany me, disguised herself as a villager. I assure you, our personal attractions lost nothing by the change of our attire. From the rue de la Jussienne to the rue Platrière is only a few steps; nevertheless, in the fear of being recognized, I took a hired carriage. Having reached our place of destination, we entered, by a shabby door, the habitation of Jean Jacques Rousseau: his apartments were on the fifth floor. I can scarcely describe to you, my friend, the emotions I experienced as I drew nearer and nearer to the author of "Héloïse." At each flight of stairs I was compelled to pause to collect my ideas, and my poor heart beat as though I had been keeping an assignation. At length, however, we reached the fifth story; thereafter having rested a few minutes to recover myself, I was about to knock at a door which was opposite to me, when, as I approached, I heard a sweet but tremulous voice singing a melancholy air, which I have never since heard anywhere; the same voice repeated the romance to which I was listening several times. When it had entirely ceased I profited by the silence to tap with my knuckles against the door, but so feeble was the signal, that even Henriette, who was close behind me, could not hear it. She begged I would permit her to ring a bell which hung near us; and, having done so, a step was heard approaching the door, and, in a minute or two, it was opened by a man of about sixty years of age, who, seeing two females, took off his cap with a sort of clumsy gallantry, at which I affected to be much flattered.

"Pray, sir," said I, endeavoring to repress my emotion, "does a person named Rousseau, a copier of music, live here?"

"Yes, madam; I am he. What is your pleasure?"

"I have been told, sir, that you are particularly skillful in copying music cheaply; I should be glad if you would undertake to copy these airs I have brought with me."

"Have the goodness to walk in, madam."

We crossed a small obscure closet, which served as a species of antechamber and entered the sitting-room of M. de Rousseau, who seated me in an arm-chair, and motioning to Henriette to sit down, once more inquired my wishes respecting the music.

"Sir," said I, "as I live in the country, and but very rarely visit Paris, I should be obliged to you to get it done as early as possible."

"Willingly, madam; I have not much upon my hands just now."

I then gave to Jean Jacques Rousseau the roll of music I had brought. He begged I would continue seated, requested permission to keep on his cap, and went to a little table to examine the music I had brought.

Upon my first entrance I had perceived a close and confined smell in these miserable apartments, but, by degrees, I became accustomed to it, and began to examine the chamber in which I sat with as strict a scrutiny as though I had intended making an inventory of its contents. Three old elbow-chairs, some rickety stools, a writing-table, on which were two or three volumes of music, some dried plants laid on white-brown paper; beside the table stood an old spinet, and, close to the latter article of furniture, sat a fat and well-looking cat. Over the chimney hung an old silver watch; the walls of the room were adorned with about half a dozen views of Switzerland and some inferior engravings, two only, which occupied the most honorable situations, struck me; one represented Frederick II., and under the picture were written some lines (which I cannot now recollect) by Rousseau himself; the other engraving, which hung opposite, was the likeness of a very tall, thin, old man, whose dress was nearly concealed by the dirt which had been allowed to accumulate upon it; I could only distinguish that it was ornamented with a broad riband. When I had sufficiently surveyed this chamber, the simplicity of which, so closely bordering on want and

misery, pained me to the heart, I directed my attention to the extraordinary man who was the occasion of my visit. He was of middle height, slightly bent by age, with a large and expansive chest; his features were common in their cast, but possessed of the most perfect regularity. His eyes, which he from time to time raised from the music he was considering, were round and sparkling but small, and the heavy brows which hung over them conveyed an idea of gloom and severity; but his mouth, which was certainly the most beautiful and fascinating in its expression I ever saw, soon removed this unfavorable impression. Altogether there belonged to his countenance a smile of mixed sweetness and sadness, which bestowed on it an indescribable charm.

To complete my description, I must not forget to add his dress, which consisted of a dirty cotton cap, to which were fixed strings of a riband that had once been scarlet; a pelisse with arm-holes, a flannel waistcoat, snuff-colored breeches, gray stockings, and shoes slipped down at the heel, after the fashion of slippers. Such was the portrait, and such the abode of the man who believed himself to be one of the potentates of the earth and who, in fact, had once owned his little court and train of courtiers; for, in the century in which he lived, talent had become as arbitrary as sovereign power—thanks to the stupidity of some of our grandees and the caprice of Frederick of Prussia.

Meanwhile my host, undisturbed by my reflections, had quietly gone over his packet of music. He found amongst it an air from *"Le Devin du Village,"* which I had purposely placed there; he half turned towards me, and looked steadfastly at me, as if he would force the truth from my lips.

"Madam," said he, "do you know the author of this little composition?"

"Yes," replied I, with an air of as great simplicity as I could assume, "it is written by a person of the same name as yourself, who writes books and composes operas. Is he any relation to you?"

My answer and question disarmed the suspicions of Jean Jacques, who was about to reply, but stopped himself, as if afraid of uttering a falsehood, and contented himself with smiling and casting down his eyes. Taking courage from his

silence, I ventured to add,—"The M. de Rousseau who composed this pretty air has written much beautiful music and many very clever works. Should I ever know the happiness of becoming a mother I shall owe to him the proper care and education of my child." Rousseau made no reply, but he turned his eyes towards me, and at this moment the expression of his countenance was perfectly celestial, and I could readily imagine how easily he might have inspired a warmer sentiment than that of admiration.

Whilst we were conversing in this manner, a female, between the age of forty and fifty, entered the room. She saluted me with great affectation of politeness, and then, without speaking to Rousseau, went and seated herself familiarly upon a chair on the other side of the table: this was Thérèse, a sort of factotum, who served the master of these apartments both as servant and mistress. I could not help regarding this woman with a feeling of disgust; she had a horrible cough, which she told us was more than usually troublesome on that day. I had heard of her avarice; therefore to prevent the appearance of having called upon an unprofitable errand, I inquired of Jean Jacques Rousseau how much the music would cost.

"Six sous a page, madam," replied he, "is the usual price."

"Shall I, sir," asked I, "leave you any cash in hand for the purchase of what paper you will require?"

"No, I thank you, madam," replied Rousseau, smiling; "thank God! I am not yet so far reduced that I cannot purchase it for you. I have a trifling annuity——"

"And you would be a much richer man," screamed Thérèse, "if you would insist upon those people at the opera paying you what they owe you." These words were accompanied with a shrug of the shoulders, intended to convey a vast idea of her own opinion.

Rousseau made no reply; indeed he appeared to me like a frightened child in the presence of its nurse; and I could quickly see, that from the moment of her entering the room he had become restless and dejected, he fidgeted on his seat, and seemed like a person in excessive pain. At length he rose, and requesting my pardon for absenting himself, he added, "My wife will have the honor to entertain you whilst

I am away." With these words he opened a small glass door, and disappeared in the neighboring room.

When we were alone with Thérèse, she lost no time in opening the conversation.

"Madam," cried she, "I trust you will have the goodness to excuse M. Rousseau; he is very unwell; it is really extremely vexatious."

I replied that M. Rousseau had made his own excuses. Just then Thérèse, wishing to give herself the appearance of great utility, cried out,

"Am I wanted there, M. Rousseau?"

"No, no, no," replied Jean Jacques, in a faint voice, which died away as if at a distance.

He soon after reëntered the room.

"Madam," said he, "have the kindness to place your music in other hands to copy; I am truly concerned that I cannot execute your wishes, but I feel too ill to set about it directly."

I replied, that I was in no hurry; that I should be in Paris some time yet, and that he might copy it at his leisure. It was then settled that it should be ready within a week from that time; upon which I rose, and ceremoniously saluting Thérèse, was conducted to the door by M. Rousseau, whose politeness led him to escort me thither, holding his cap in his hand. I retired, filled with admiration, respect, and pity.

When next I saw the duc d'Aiguillon, I could not refrain from relating to him all that had happened. My recital inspired him with the most lively curiosity to see Rousseau, whom he had never met in society. It was then agreed, that when I went to fetch my music he should accompany me, disguised in a similar manner to myself, and that I should pass him off as my uncle. At the end of the eight days I repaired early as before to Paris; the duke was not long in joining me there. He was so inimitably well disguised, that no person would ever have detected the most elegant nobleman of the court of France beneath the garb of a plain country squire. We set out laughing like simpletons at the easy air with which he wore his new costume; nevertheless our gayety disappeared as we reached the habitation of J. J. Rousseau. Spite of ourselves we were compelled to honor and respect the man of talent and genius, who preferred independence of ideas to

riches, and before whom rank and power were compelled to lay aside their unmeaning trappings ere they could reach his presence. When we reached the fifth landing-place I rang, and this time the door was opened by Thérèse, who told us M. Rousseau was out.

"But, madam," answered I, "I am here by the direction of your husband to fetch away the music he has been engaged in copying for me."

"Ah, madam," exclaimed she, "is it you? I did not recollect you again; pray walk in. M. Rousseau will be sure to be at home for you."

"So, then," thought I, "even genius has its visiting lists." We entered; Jean Jacques formally saluted us, and invited us to be seated. He then gave me my music; I inquired what it came to; he consulted a little memorandum which lay upon the table, and replied, "So many pages, so much paper, eighteen livres twelve sous;" which, of course, I instantly paid. The duc d'Aiguillon, whom I styled my uncle, was endeavoring to lead Rousseau into conversation, when the outer bell rung. Thérèse went to open the door, and a gentleman entered, of mature age, although still preserving his good looks. The duke regarded him in silence and immediately made signs for me to hasten our departure; I obeyed, and took leave of Rousseau, with many thanks for his punctuality. He accompanied us as before to the door, and there I quitted him never to see him more. As we were descending the staircase, M. d'Aiguillon told me that the person who had so hastened our departure was Duclas, and that his hurry to quit Rousseau arose from his dread of being recognized by him. Although M. Duclas was a very excellent man, I must own that I owed no small grudge for a visit which had thus abridged ours.

In the evening the duc d'Aiguillon and myself related to the king our morning's pilgrimage. I likewise recounted my former visit, which I had concealed until now. Louis XV. seemed greatly interested with the recital of it; he asked me a thousand questions, and would fain hear the most trifling particulars.

"I shall never forget," said Louis XV., "the amazing success obtained by his '*Devin du Village.*'" There certainly

were some beautiful airs, and the king began to hum over the song of

*"J'ai perdu tout mon bonheur."*

"Yes, madam," continued his majesty, "I promise you, that had Rousseau after his success chosen to step forward as a candidate for public favor, he would soon have overthrown Voltaire."

"Pardon me," replied I; "but I cannot believe that would have been possible under any circumstances."

"And why not?" asked the king; "he was a man of great talent."

"Doubtless, sire, but not of the kind to compete with Voltaire."

The king then changed the conversation to Thérèse, inquiring whether she possessed any attractions?

"None whatever, sire," replied the duke; "at least none that we could perceive."

"In that case," rejoined his majesty, "she must have charmed her master by some of those unseen perfections which take the deepest hold of the heart; besides I know not why we should think it strange that others see with different eyes to ourselves."

I made no secret with the comte Jean of my visit, and he likewise expressed his desire to know a man so justly celebrated, and, in its proper place, you may hear how he managed to effect this, and what befell him in consequence—but, to finish for the present with Rousseau, for I will not promise that I shall not again indulge in speaking of him. I will just say, that after the lapse of two or three days from the time of my last visit, the idea occurred to me of sending him a thousand crowns in an Indian casket. This I sent by a servant out of livery, whom I strictly enjoined not to name me but to say simply that he came from a lady. He brought back the casket to me unopened, and the following billet from Rousseau:—

"Madam,—I send back the present you would force upon my acceptance in so concealed a manner; if it be offered as a testimony of your esteem I may possibly accept it, when you

permit me to know the hand from which it comes. Be assured, madam, that there is much truth in the assertion of its being more easy to give than to receive.

"I have the honor to remain, madam, yours, etc., etc.,

"J. J. ROUSSEAU."

This was rather an uncouth manner of refusing; nevertheless, when at this distance of time I review the transaction, I cannot help admitting that I well deserved it. Perhaps when it first occurred I might have felt piqued, but since I have quitted the court I have again read over the works of J. J. Rousseau, and I now speak of him, as you see, without one particle of resentment.

IX

PERHAPS no person ever entertained so great a dread of death as Louis XV., consequently no one required to be more carefully prepared for the alarming intelligence which was abruptly communicated to him by La Martinière, and which, in a manner, appeared to sign the king's death-warrant.

To every person who approached him the despairing monarch could utter only the fatal phrase, "I have the small-pox," which, in his lips, was tantamount to his declaring himself a dead man. Alas! had his malady been confined to the small-pox, he might still have been spared to our prayers; but, unhappily, a complication of evils, which had long been lurking in his veins, burst forth with a violence which, united to his cruel complaint, bade defiance to surgical or medical skill.

Yet, spite of the terror with which the august sufferer contemplated his approaching end, he did not lose sight of the interests of the nation as vested in the person of the dauphin, whom he positively prohibited, as well as his other grandsons, from entering his chamber or even visiting the part of the château he occupied. After this he seemed to divest himself of all further care for sublunary things; no papers were brought for his inspection, nor did he ever more sign any official document.

The next request made by Louis XV. was for his daughters, who presented themselves bathed in tears, and vainly striving to repress that grief which burst forth in spite of all their

endeavors. The king replied to their sobs, by saying, "My children, I have the small-pox; but weep not. These gentlemen [pointing towards the physicians] assure me they can cure me." But, while uttering this cheerful sentence, his eye caught the stern and iron countenance of La Martinière, whose look of cool disbelief seemed to deny the possibility of such an event.

With a view to divert her father from the gloom which all at once came over his features, the princess Adelaide informed him that she had a letter addressed to him by her sister, madame Louise.

"Let me hear it," cried the king; "it is, no doubt some heavenly mission with which she is charged. But who knows?" He stopped, but it was easy to perceive that to the fear of death was added a dread of his well-being in another world. Madame Adelaide then read the letter with a low voice, while the attendants retired to a respectful distance. All eyes were directed to the countenance of the king, in order to read there the nature of its contents; but already had the ravages of his fatal disease robbed his features of every expression, save that of pain and suffering.

The princesses now took their stations beside their parent, and established themselves as nurses, an office which, I can with truth affirm, they continued to fill unto the last with all the devotion of the purest filial piety.

On this same day Louis XV. caused me to be sent for. I ran to his bedside trembling with alarm. The various persons engaged in his apartment retired when they saw me, and we were left alone.

"My beloved friend," said the king, "I have the small-pox; I am still very ill."

"Nay, sire," interrupted I, "you must not fancy things worse than they are; you will do well, depend upon it, and we shall yet pass many happy days together."

"Do you indeed think so?" returned Louis XV. "May heaven grant your prophecy be a correct one. But see the state in which I now am; give me your hand."

He took my hand and made me feel the pustules with which his burning cheeks were covered. I know not what effect this touch of my hand might have produced, but the king in his

turn patted my face, pushed back the curls which hung negligently over my brow; then, inclining me towards him, drew my head upon his pillow. I submitted to this whim with all the courage I could assume; I even went so far as to be upon the point of bestowing a gentle kiss upon his forehead. But, stopping me, with a mournful air, he said, "No, my lovely countess; I am no longer myself, but here is a miniature which has not undergone the same change as its unfortunate master."

I took the miniature, which I placed with respectful tenderness in my bosom, nor have I ever parted with it since.

This scene lasted for some minutes, after which I was retiring, but the king called me back, seized my hand, which he tenderly kissed, and then whispered an affectionate "Adieu." These were the last words I ever heard from his lips.

Upon reëntering my apartments I found madame de Mirepoix awaiting me, to whom I related all that had taken place, expressing, at the same time, my earnest hope of being again summoned, ere long, to the presence of my friend and benefactor.

"Do not deceive yourself, my dear," said she; "depend upon it you have had your last interview; you should have employed it more profitably. His portrait! why, if I mistake not, you have *five* already. Why did you not carry about with you some deed of settlement ready for signature? he would have denied you nothing at such a moment, when you may rest assured he knew himself to be taking his last farewell."

"Is it possible?" exclaimed I. "And can you really suppose the king believed he spoke to me for the last time?"

"I have not the slightest doubt of it; I have known him for many a day. He remembers the scene of Metz, and looks upon you as forming the second edition of the poor duchesse de Chateauroux, who, by the by, was not equal to you in any respect."

I burst into a fit of tears, but not of regret for having allowed my late interview with the king to pass in so unprofitable a manner. However, the maréchale, misconceiving the cause of this burst of grief, exclaimed, "Come, come; it is too late now, and all your sorrow cannot recall the last

half-hour. But, mademoiselle du Barry," continued she, "I advise you to commence your packing up at once, that when the grand move comes, you may not in your hurry, leave anything behind you."

These remarks increased my affliction, but the maréchale had no intention of wounding my feelings, and worldly-minded as she was, considered all that could be saved out of the wreck as the only subject worthy attention. Meanwhile, comte Jean, with a gloomy and desponding air, continued silently with folded arms to pace the room, till all at once, as if suddenly struck by the arguments of madame de Mirepoix, he exclaimed,

"The maréchale is right"; and abruptly quitted the apartment, as if to commence his own preparations.

Ere madame de Mirepoix had left me and she remained till a late hour, the ducs d'Aiguillon and de Cossé arrived, who, although less experienced in their knowledge of the king's character, were yet fully of her opinion respecting my last visit to him.

Scarcely had these visitors withdrawn, than I was apprized that the chancellor of France desired to see me. He was admitted, and the first glance of the countenance of M. de Maupeou convinced me that our day of power was rapidly closing.

"Your servant, cousin," said he, seating himself without the smallest ceremony; "at what page of our history have we arrived?"

"By the unusual freedom and effrontery of your manner," answered I, "I should surmise that we have reached the word *finis.*"

"Oh," replied the chancellor, "I crave your pardon for having omitted my best bow; but, my good cousin, my present visit is a friendly one, to advise you to burn your papers with as little delay as possible."

"Thank you for your considerate counsel," said I, coolly, "but I have no papers to destroy. I have neither mixed with any state intrigue, nor received a pension from the English government. Nothing will be found in my drawers but some unanswered billets-doux."

"Then as I can do nothing for you, my good cousin, oblige

me by giving this paper to the duc d'Aiguillon." Upon which the chancellor, presuming until the last upon our imaginary relationship, kissed my cheek, and having put into my hands the paper in question, retired with a profound bow.

This ironical leave taking left me stupefied with astonishment, and well I presaged my coming disgrace from the absurd mummery the chancellor had thought fit to play off.

Comte Jean, who had seen M. de Maupeou quit the house, entered my apartment to inquire the reason of his visit. Silent and dejected, I allowed my brother-in-law to take up the paper, which he read without any ceremony. "What is the meaning of this scrawl?" cried comte Jean, with one of his usual oaths; "upon my word our cousin is a fine fellow," continued he, crushing the paper between his fingers. "I'll engage that he still hopes to keep his place; however, one thing consoles me, and that is, that both he and his parliament will soon be sent to the right about."

Our conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Chamilly, who came to acquaint me that the king was sleeping, and did not wish to be again disturbed that night. Remembering my usual omnipotence in the château, I was about, like a true idiot, to prove to Chamilly that the king's interdict did not extend to me, when I was stopped in my purpose by the appearance of the duc d'Aiguillon; and as it was now nearly eleven o'clock at night, I could scarcely doubt his being the bearer of some extraordinary message.

## X

I said I did not expect the duc d'Aiguillon; and the grief which was spread over his features, and the large tears which stood in his eyes, persuaded me but too plainly that all hope was at an end.

"Is the king dead?" cried I, in a stifled voice.

"No, madam," replied he, "Louis XV. still lives, nor is it by any means certain that the misfortune you apprehend is in store for us."

"He sends me from him, then," exclaimed I, with a convulsive cry, "and my enemies have triumphed."

"His majesty is but of human nature, madam," replied the duke; "he feels himself dangerously ill, dreads the future,

and believes that he owes his people a sort of reparation for past errors."

"How, my lord duke," interrupted I, "this grave language in your lips—but no matter. Inform me only at whose desire you state these melancholy facts; speak, I am prepared for your mission, be it what it may."

"You shall hear everything, madam," replied the duke, leading me to an arm-chair. I seated myself; my sisters-in-law, my niece, and comte Jean stood around me, eagerly waiting the duke's communication. "A few hours after you had been removed from his chamber, the king inquired of the princess Adelaide whether it were generally known at Paris that he had the small-pox. The princess replied in the affirmative, adding:

" 'The archbishop of Paris was here twice during yesterday to inquire after you.'

" 'Yet I belong more properly to the diocese of Chartres,' returned the king, 'and surely M. de Fleury would not interest himself less about me than M. de Beaumont.'

" 'They are both truly anxious about you, my dearest father, and if you would only see them——'

" 'No, no,' answered Louis XV.; 'they must not be taken from the duties of their respective dioceses; besides, in case of need, I have my grand almoner.'

"Madame Adelaide did not venture to urge the matter further just then, and, after a short interval of silence, a message was brought from you, inquiring whether you could see the king, to which he himself replied, that he felt inclined to sleep, and would rather not see any person that night. I was in the chamber, and he very shortly called me to him, and said:

" 'Duc d'Aiguillon, I have the small-pox; and you are aware that there is a sort of etiquette in my family which enjoins my immediately discharging my duties as a Christian.'

" 'Yes, sire, if the malady wore a serious aspect; but in your case——'

" 'May God grant,' replied he, 'that my disorder be not dangerous; however, it may become so, if it is as yet harmless, and I would fain die as a believer rather than an infidel. I have been a great sinner, doubtless; but I have ever observed

Lent with a most scrupulous exactitude. I have caused more than a hundred thousand masses to be said for the repose of unhappy souls; I have respected the clergy, and punished the authors of all impious works, so that I flatter myself I have not been a very bad Christian.'

"I listened to his discourse with a heavy heart, yet I still strove to reassure the king respecting his health, of which, I assured him, there was not the slightest doubt.

" 'There is one sacrifice,' said the king, in a low and hurried tone, 'that my daughter Louise, her sisters, and the clergy, will not be long in exacting from me in the name of etiquette. I recollect the scene of Metz, and it would be highly disagreeable to me to have it repeated at Versailles; let us, therefore, take our precautions in time to prevent it. Tell the duchesse d'Aiguillon that she will oblige me by taking the comtesse du Barry to pass two or three days with her at Ruel.'

" 'How, sire!' exclaimed I, 'send your dearest friend from you at a time when you most require her cares?'

" 'I do not send her away,' answered the king, with mournful tenderness, 'I but yield to present necessity; let her submit as she values my happiness, and say to her, that I hope and believe her absence will be very short.' "

The duke here ceased his recital, which fully confirmed all my previous anticipations. My female relatives sobbed aloud, while comte Jean, compressing his lips, endeavored to assume that firmness he did not really possess. By a violent effort I forced myself to assume a sort of resignation.

"Am I required to depart immediately?" inquired I.

"No," said the duke; "to leave the château in the middle of the night would be to assume the air of a flight, we had better await the coming day; it will, besides, afford time to apprize the duchess."

It was the Wednesday of the fifth of May that I took my seat in the carriage of the duchesse d'Aiguillon accompanied by my sister-in-law and the vicomtesse Adolphe, who would not forsake me. Bischi remained with madame d'Hargicourt, whose duties detained her with the comtesse d'Artois. Her husband also remained at Versailles, while comte Jean and his son proceeded to Paris. I will not attempt to describe the

emotions with which I quitted my magnificent suite of apartments, and traversed the halls and staircases already crowded by persons anxiously awaiting the first intimation of the king's decease. I was wrapped in my pelisse, and effectually eluded observation. It has been said that I left Versailles at four o'clock in the morning, but that was a mere invention on the part of my servants to baffle the curiosity of those who might have annoyed me by their presence.

THE END

# JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

## THE GREATEST POET AND THINKER OF THE GERMAN RACE

## 1749-1832

### (INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

Goethe gave to his autobiography the title "Aus meinem Leben: Dichtung und Wahrheit," or literally translated, "Out of My Life: Poetry and Truth," but it has become generally known as simply "Poetry and Truth." It covers only twenty-six of his eighty-two years, the period between 1749 and 1775, but most vividly we see the boy, the youth, and the young man who, at twenty-five, had become the greatest writer of Germany, if not the foremost writer of his time. Already he was the author of "Goetz von Berlichingen" and "Werther."

This autobiography as a work of art is perhaps superior to all others. It is a model of the philosophic treatment of biography. Goethe in his preface to the book gave his concept of his task as follows: "In my endeavors to present in due order the inner motives, the external influences, and the stages of my progress in theory and practice, I was carried out of my narrow private sphere into the wide world. The figures of scores of eminent men, who either directly or indirectly had influenced me, rose up before me; and even the vast movements of the great political world, which had exercised the greatest influence upon me, as well as upon the great mass of my contemporaries, claimed particular attention. For the main function of biography seems to be to exhibit the man in relation to his times, and to show to what extent this environment was inimical or propitious to him; how he evolved from it a philosophy of the world and of men, and in what way he, in his turn, if an artist, poet, or author, reproduced this philosophy in concrete form. Any one attempting to write his own biography in this sense requires—what is hardly attainable—a knowledge of himself and of his age: of himself as the factor which has persisted under all the variations of circumstances; of the age as the force which hurries him, whether willing or unwilling, along with it, guiding him, molding him; so that one may venture to pronounce, that the fact of being born ten years earlier or later would have made an entirely different person, as regards his own development and his influence on others."

With this extract in mind we can more readily appreciate how the

author of "Faust" fulfilled his difficult premises in "Poetry and Truth." And his achievement is all the more remarkable when we know that he undertook the task on the threshold of old age, after the completion of his sixtieth year in 1809. Schiller was dead, and the disruption of old Germany (1806) had taken place. By January, 1814, Goethe had completed the first fifteen books of the autobiography, and they appeared in print just as his country was entering its life and death struggle with Napoleon. The last five sections were not completed until October, 1831, a few months before Goethe's death. There had been many distractions offsetting the progress of the work.

Goethe was fond of calling his separate literary productions "fragments of a great confession." He put himself in everything he wrote. Early in life he had an intense enthusiasm for autobiographical writings, and this passion remained undiminished throughout his long career. In 1796 he translated Benvenuto Cellini's book into German, and the "Confessions" of Rousseau produced a lasting impression upon his mind. His first famous drama, "Goetz," was inspired by the autobiography of that robber-knight.

In this "Poetry and Truth" one finds a wealth of matter—literary, artistic, political portraits, the vital events and movements of the day, the tense period of *Sturm und Drang*, and the cares and pleasures of Germany in the second half of the eighteenth century. The various love affairs of the youthful genius are delightful, and show the skill of both the novelist and psychologist. All the great autobiographies that had appeared prior to Goethe's had merely dealt with the personal development of the writer, but he attempted and succeeded in showing the individual in his relation to the universal. The reception of his work by his contemporaries was not worthy of its high effort and achievement, but now, after a hundred years, it is hailed as one of the undisputed masterpieces of literature.

## POETRY AND TRUTH FROM MY OWN LIFE

### FIRST BOOK

On the 28th of August, 1749, at mid-day, as the clock struck twelve, I came into the world, at Frankfort-on-the-Main. The aspect of the stars was propitious: the sun stood in the sign of the Virgin, and had culminated for the day; Jupiter and Venus looked on him with a friendly eye, and Mercury not adversely; the attitude of Saturn and Mars was neutral; the Moon alone, just full, exerted her power of opposition, all the more as she had just reached her planetary hour.

She therefore resisted my birth, which could not be accomplished until this hour was passed.

These auspicious aspects, which the astrologers subsequently interpreted very favorably for me, may have been the causes of my preservation; for, through the unskillfulness of the midwife, I came into the world apparently lifeless, and only after various expedients had been tried was I made to open my eyes. This circumstance, which had caused my relatives great anxiety, turned out to the advantage of my fellow-citizens, inasmuch as my grandfather, the *Schultheiss*,[1] Johann Wolfgang Textor, was induced by it to appoint an accoucheur, and to introduce or revive the professional training of nurses, by which changes many who were born after me are likely to have profited.

When we attempt to recall what befell us in the earliest period of youth, we are apt to confound what we have been told by others with what we remember from our own experience. Without, therefore, attempting an exact investigation of the sources of my recollections—in any case a profitless task—I know as a fact that we lived in an old house, which really consisted of two adjoining houses that had been thrown into one. A turret-like staircase led to rooms on different levels, and the unevenness of the storeys was remedied by steps. For us children, a younger sister and myself, the favorite resort was the spacious entrance-hall, where, by the side of the front door, was a large wooden lattice, through which we had direct communication with the street and open air.

My father's mother, to whom the house in which we lived really belonged, passed her days in a large back-room directly adjoining the hall, and we were accustomed to carry on our games close to her chair, and when she was ill, even by her bedside. She lives in my memory like a spirit,—a beautiful, emaciated woman, always dressed neatly and in white. She has ever remained mild, gentle, and kind in my recollection of her.

My father was naturally fond of teaching, and, being free from business engagements, he liked to communicate to others any knowledge and accomplishments of which he was pos-

[1] A chief judge or magistrate of the town.

sessed. Thus, during the first years of their marriage, he had kept my mother busily engaged in writing, playing the clavichord, and singing; at the same time she had found it necessary to acquire some knowledge of Italian and some slight facility in speaking it.

Generally we passed all our leisure hours with my grandmother, in whose spacious apartment we found plenty of room for our games. She knew how to amuse us with various trifles, and to regale us with all sorts of delicacies. But one Christmas evening, she crowned all her kind deeds by having a puppet-show exhibited before us, and thus unfolded a new world in the old house. This unexpected performance had a powerful attraction for our young minds; upon the boy particularly it made a very strong impression, which affected him deeply and permanently.

The little stage with its mute personages, which at the outset had only been exhibited to us, but was afterwards given over to us to use and endow with dramatic life, was prized all the more highly by us children, inasmuch as it was the last bequest of our dear grandmother, who soon afterwards was withdrawn from our sight by increasing sickness, and then carried off by death forever. Her death was the more momentous for our family, seeing that it involved a complete change in our circumstances.

As long as my grandmother lived, my father had refrained from altering or renovating the house in the slightest degree, though it was known that he had made plans for extensive building operations, which were begun at once.

It was about this period that I first became acquainted with my native city, through which I strolled with increasing freedom and opportunity, sometimes alone, and sometimes in the company of light-hearted companions. What chiefly attracted my childish attention, were the many little towns within the town, the fortresses within the fortress; viz. the walled monastic inclosures, and several other buildings, dating from earlier times, and more or less like castles—such as the Nuremberg Court, the Compostella, the Braunfels, the ancestral house of the family of Stallburg, and several strongholds, transformed in modern times into dwellings and warehouses. Nothing of striking architectural beauty was to be

seen in Frankfort, and everything pointed to a period long past and full of disturbances, both for the town and its surroundings. Gates and towers, defining the bounds of the old city,—then farther off, other gates, towers, walls, bridges, ramparts, moats, with which the new city was encompassed, —all indicated, only too plainly, that the necessity for safeguarding the common weal in disastrous times had induced these arrangements, and that all the squares and streets, even the newest, broadest, and best laid out, owed their origin to chance and caprice, and not to any regulating mind. A certain love of antiquity was thus implanted in the boy, and was specially fostered and encouraged by old chronicles and woodcuts, as, for instance, those of Grave portraying the siege of Frankfort. At the same time there developed in him a delight in observing the purely human conditions of life in their variety and simplicity, apart from any other pretensions to interest or beauty. It was, therefore, one of our favorite walks, which we endeavored to take several times a year, to follow the course of the path which ran along the inside of the city walls. Gardens, courts, and out-buildings extend to the ramparts; a glimpse is afforded into the humble and secluded domestic life of thousands of human beings.

A more important, and in one sense more profitable place for us, was the Town Hall, called the *Römer*. In its lower vault-like halls we loved to lose ourselves. We obtained an entrance to the large, extremely plain Council Chamber. The walls as well as the vaulted ceiling were white, though paneled to a certain height, and the whole was without a trace of painting, or any kind of statuary; only, high up on the middle wall, might be read this brief inscription:

> "One man's word is no man's word,
> Justice needs that both be heard."

An extraordinary event, affecting the whole world, deeply disturbed the boy's peace of mind, for the first time. On the 1st of November, 1755, the earthquake at Lisbon occurred, and spread a mighty terror over the world, long accustomed to peace and quiet. A great and magnificent capital, at the same time a trading and maritime city, is smitten, without warning, by a most fearful calamity. The earth trembles

and totters, the sea rages, ships are dashed together, houses collapse, churches and towers on the top of them, the royal palace is in part swallowed by the waters, the cleft earth seems to vomit flames, since smoke and fire are seen everywhere amid the ruins. Sixty thousand persons, a moment before in ease and comfort, are annihilated at once, and he is to be deemed most fortunate who was not allowed time for thought or consciousness of the disaster. The flames rage on, and with them rage a troop of desperadoes, who usually lurk in concealment, and who were set at large by this event. The wretched survivors are exposed to pillage, massacre, and every outrage: and thus, on all sides, Nature asserts her boundless caprice.

Vague intimations of this event had spread far and wide more quickly than the authentic reports: slight shocks had been felt in many places: many springs, particularly those with medicinal properties, were seen to be much less full than usual; all the greater was the effect of the accounts themselves, which were rapidly circulated, at first in general terms, but finally with shocking details. Hereupon, the religious were ready with reflections, the philosophic with grounds for consolation, and the clergy with warnings. All this combined to turn the attention of the world for a time in this direction; and, as additional and more detailed accounts of the far-reaching effects of this explosion came from every quarter, people whose minds were already perturbed by the misfortunes of others, began to be more and more anxious about themselves and their friends. Perhaps at no other time has the demon of terror sent his tremors through the earth so rapidly and overwhelmingly.

The boy, who had to listen to frequent repetitions of these events, was not a little shocked. God, the Creator and Preserver of Heaven and Earth, whom the explanation of the first article of the creed represented as so wise and benignant, had, by giving both the just and the unjust a prey to the same destruction, not manifested Himself, by any means, in a fatherly character. In vain his young mind strove to resist these impressions. It was the more impossible, as the wise and devout could not themselves agree as to the light in which such a phenomenon should be regarded.

These events, startling as they were on the whole, did not greatly interrupt the systematic course of instruction which my father himself had undertaken to give us children. In his youth he had attended the Coburg Gymnasium, which occupied a leading position among German educational institutions. He had there been well grounded in languages, and other subjects reckoned part of a learned education, had subsequently applied himself to jurisprudence at Leipzig, and finally had taken his degree at Giessen. His dissertation, "*Electa de aditione hereditatis,*" thoughtfully and carefully written, still receives honorable mention from jurists.

It is a pious wish of all fathers to see what they have themselves failed to attain, realized in their sons, as if they were in a manner living their lives over again, and could at last turn their early experience to account. Conscious of his acquirements, certain of unfailing perseverance, and distrusting the teachers of the day, my father undertook to instruct his children himself, only allowing them such special lessons from professional masters as seemed absolutely necessary. An educational *dilettantism* was already beginning to appear very generally. The pedantry and dreariness of the regular masters in the public schools were probably its source. There was a desire for something better, but no account was taken of the necessary imperfection of all instruction which is not given by trained teachers.

My father had succeeded in his own career very much as he had wished: I was to follow the same course, only the way was to be easier and go further. He prized my natural endowments the more, because he was himself wanting in them; for all his attainments were the result of incredible diligence, pertinacity, and repetition. He often assured me, early and late, in jest and in earnest, that with my talents he would have behaved very differently, and would not have wasted them so prodigally.

By rapidly apprehending, assimilating, and retaining what I was taught, I very soon outgrew the instructions which my father and the other teachers were able to give, without being thoroughly grounded in anything. Grammar displeased me, because I regarded it as a mere arbitrary law; the rules seemed to me ridiculous, because they were invalidated by

so many exceptions, which had all to be learned by themselves. And but for the Latin primer in rhyme, I should have fared badly; but as it was, I enjoyed humming and singing it to myself. We had, too, a geography in mnemonic verses, in which the most wretched doggerel best served to fix in our minds what we had to learn: *e.g.:*

Upper-Yssel—many a fen,
Makes it hateful to all men.

For linguistic forms and usages I had a ready perception; and I also quickly realized what was involved in the conception of a thing. In rhetorical exercises, set compositions, and similar tasks, no one excelled me, although I was often made to take a low place for faults of grammar. It was essays such as these that gave my father particular pleasure, and for which he often rewarded me with presents of money, considerable for such a lad.

My father taught my sister Italian in the same room in which I had to commit Cellarius to memory. As I had soon ended my task, and yet was obliged to sit quiet, I listened with my book before me, and very readily picked up Italian, which struck me as an amusing variation of Latin.

Other precocities, as regards memory and the power of connecting things, I possessed in common with other children who have attracted attention in early years by their powers. For that reason my father could scarcely await the time for me to go to college. He very soon declared, that I too must go to Leipzig, for which university he retained a strong predilection, and there study law as he had done, and I was afterwards to visit some other university and take my degree. With regard to this second university he was indifferent which I should choose, except that he had for some reason a disinclination to Göttingen, to my great disappointment; for it was precisely Göttingen which had inspired me with confidence and raised high hopes within me.

He told me further, that I was to go to Wetzlar and Ratisbon as well as to Vienna, and thence to Italy, although he repeatedly affirmed that Paris must be seen first, because on coming from Italy nothing after it could give pleasure.

I loved to hear these tales of my future youthful career

repeated, especially as they always ended in an account of Italy, and finally in a description of Naples. His usual gravity and dryness seemed on these occasions to be dispelled and to give place to animation, and thus a passionate wish awoke in us children that we might be admitted into the paradises he described.

The publication, or rather the manufacture, of those books which at a later day became so well known and celebrated under the name of *Volksschriften, Volksbücher* (popular works or chap-books), was carried on in Frankfort itself. The immense demand for them led to their being printed from stereotypes on the most hideous absorbent paper, so that they were barely legible. We children were lucky to find these precious survivals from the Middle Ages every day on a little table at the door of a vendor of old books, and to make them our own for a few *kreutzer*. The Eulenspiegel, the Four Sons of Aymon, the Fair Melusina, the Emperor Octavian, the Beautiful Magelone, Fortunatus, and all the rest of them down to the Wandering Jew, were at our service, whenever we coveted such works in preference to sweet-meats. One great advantage was, that when we had read, worn out, or otherwise damaged such a sheet, it could easily be procured again and devoured anew.

As a sudden thunderstorm proves a disastrous interruption to a family picnic in summer, transforming every one's enjoyment into the very reverse, so childish ailments break in unexpectedly upon the most beautiful season of early life. Nor was it otherwise with me. I had just purchased Fortunatus with his Purse and Wishing-Cap, when I was attacked by discomfort and feverishness, the forerunners of small-pox. Inoculation was still considered with us a very doubtful expedient, and although it had already been intelligibly and urgently recommended by popular writers, the German physicians hesitated to perform an operation that seemed to forestall nature. Speculative Englishmen, therefore, had come to the continent, and for a considerable fee had vaccinated the children of such persons as were well-to-do and free from prejudice. Still, the majority were exposed to the old disease; the infection raged through whole families, killed or disfigured many children; and few parents dared

to avail themselves of the new remedy, although its probable efficacy had been confirmed in many cases by the result. The disease now invaded our house and attacked me with unusual severity. My whole body was covered with spots, and my face irrecognizable, and for several days I lay unable to see and in great pain. They tried all possible alleviations, and promised me mountains of gold if I would keep quiet and not increase the mischief by rubbing and scratching. I controlled myself, while, according to the prevailing prejudice, we were kept as warm as possible, which only made our suffering more acute. At last, after a woeful time, there fell a kind of mask from my face. The blotches had left no visible mark upon the skin, but the features were noticeably altered.

I escaped neither measles, nor chicken-pox, nor whatever the other torments of childhood may be; and I was assured each time that it was a good thing that this malady was now done with once for all. But, alas! another was already threatening me in the background, and attacked me. All these things increased my propensity to reflection; and as I had often practiced endurance, in order to overcome the torture of impatience, the virtues which I had heard praised in the Stoics appeared to me highly worthy of imitation, all the more as they resembled the Christian virtue of patience.

While on the subject of family illnesses, I will mention a brother about three years younger than myself, who was likewise attacked by the same infection, and suffered greatly from it. He was naturally delicate, quiet and self-willed, and we were never great friends. Besides, he hardly lived beyond infancy. Of several younger children, who like him did not live long, I only remember a very pretty and attractive little girl, who also soon passed away; so that, after the lapse of some years, my sister and I were left alone, and were all the more deeply and affectionately attached to each other.

These maladies and other unpleasant interruptions were doubly irksome in their consequences; for my father, who seemed to have drawn up a kind of calendar of education and instruction, was anxious to make up every omission immediately, and imposed double lessons upon the young convalescents. It is true I did not find them hard, but they were unwelcome in so far as they retarded and to some

extent repressed my natural development, which had begun to follow independent lines.

It goes without saying that we children received among other lessons, regular and progressive instruction in religion. But the Church-Protestantism imparted to us was, properly speaking, nothing but a kind of dry morality: no one dreamt of presenting it in an interesting form; and the doctrines failed to satisfy either soul or heart. Hence there were various secessions from the Established Church. Separatists, Pietists, Moravians, and whatever else their names and titles might be, sprang into being, all animated by the common desire of drawing nearer to the Deity, especially through Christ, than seemed to them possible under the forms of the established religion.

The boy heard these opinions and sentiments constantly spoken of; for the clergy as well as the laity took sides for and against. Those who dissented more or less widely were always in the minority, but their mode of thought was attractive from its originality, sincerity, constancy, and independence. All sorts of stories were told of their virtues and of the way in which they were manifested. The reply of a pious master-tinman was especially well-known, who, when one of his fellow-craftsmen thought to put him to shame by asking him who was his father confessor, answered cheerfully, confident in the goodness of his cause—"A very distinguished one—no less a person than the confessor of King David."

Things of this sort naturally made an impression on the boy, and encouraged him in similar ways of thinking. In fact, the idea occurred to him of directly approaching the great God of Nature, the Creator and Preserver of Heaven and Earth, whose earlier manifestations of wrath had been long forgotten in the beauty of the world and the manifold blessings granted us in it. The way he took to attain this end was very curious.

The boy had chiefly concentrated his attention upon the first article of the creed. The God who stands in immediate connection with nature, and recognizes and loves it as His handiwork, seemed to him the real God, who might enter into closer relationship with man, as with everything else,

and who would make him His care, as well as the motion of the stars, times and seasons, plants and animals. There were passages in the Gospels which explicitly stated this. The boy could ascribe no form to this Being; he therefore sought Him in His works, and desired to build Him an altar in true Old Testament fashion. Natural productions were to represent the world symbolically; above these a flame was to burn, signifying the aspiration of man's heart towards his Maker. From his natural history museum, gradually stocked as opportunity occurred, the boy brought out his best samples of ore and other specimens; but now came the difficulty—how to arrange them and build them up into a pile. His father possessed a beautiful red lacquered music-stand, ornamented with gilt flowers, in the form of a four-sided pyramid with ledges at various heights, which had proved convenient for quartets, but had been little used latterly. The boy possessed himself of this stand, and built up his representatives of Nature one above the other in tiers, so that the result was pleasing, and at the same time impressive. The first act of worship was to take place at early sunrise, but the young priest had not yet made up his mind how to produce a flame which should at the same time emit an agreeable odor. A method of attaining these two ends at last occurred to him, for he possessed a few fumigating tapers, which if they did not make a flame, yet diffused a pleasant fragrance as they smoldered. Indeed, this gentle burning and exhalation seemed a more fitting symbol of what passes in the soul than an actual flame. The sun had risen long before, but the neighboring houses shut out the east. At last it rose above the roofs; forthwith a burning-glass was applied and kindled the tapers, which were placed at the top of his erection in a beautiful china saucer. Everything succeeded according to his heart's desire, and his religious service was complete. The altar was left standing as a special ornament in the room which had been assigned him in the new house. Every one regarded it as merely an ornamental collection of natural curiosities. The boy knew better, but concealed his knowledge. He longed for a repetition of the ceremony. But unfortunately, just as the sun rose most favorably, the porcelain saucer was not at hand; he placed the tapers directly on the

upper surface of the stand; they were kindled, and so great was the devotion of the priest, that he did not observe, until it was too late, the mischief his sacrifice was doing. The tapers had burned mercilessly into the red lacquer and beautiful gold flowers, as if some evil spirit had been there, and left black, ineffaceable footprints. This disaster caused the young priest extreme embarrassment. The damage could be concealed, it was true, by the larger specimens, but he had lost heart for new offerings, and the accident might almost be considered an indication and warning as to the danger which subsists in attempting to approach the Deity in such a way.

## SECOND BOOK

Scarcely had I completed my seventh year, on the 28th of August, 1756, than the war of world-wide interest broke out, which was destined to exert a great influence upon the next seven years of my life. Frederick II., King of Prussia, had invaded Saxony with sixty thousand men; and instead of prefacing his invasion by a declaration of war, he followed it up with a manifesto, said to be composed by himself, which stated the motives for and the justification of so tremendous a step. The world, which felt itself called upon to be judge as well as spectator, immediately split into two parties, and our family did but reflect the attitude of the larger whole.

My grandfather, who, as *Schöff* of Frankfort, had carried the coronation canopy over Francis I., and had received from the Empress a heavy gold chain with her likeness, took the Austrian side, along with several sons-in-law and daughters. My father having been nominated to the Imperial Council by Charles VII., and sympathizing sincerely in the fate of that unhappy monarch, had Prussian leanings, with the other and smaller half of the family. The gatherings which had taken place on Sundays for many years without a break, were very soon disturbed. The misunderstandings, so common among relatives by marriage, for the first time took definite form and found expression. There were contentions, discord, silence, and outbursts of anger. My grandfather, otherwise a serene, quiet, and easy man, became im-

patient. The women vainly endeavored to smother the flames; and after some unpleasant scenes my father was the first to withdraw from the company of the others. We were now free at home to rejoice in the Prussian victories, which were usually announced with great jubilation by our excitable aunt. Every other interest had to give way to this, and we passed the rest of the year in constant agitation. The occupation of Dresden, the King's moderation at the outset, his slow but sure progress, the victory at Lowositz, the capture of the Saxons, were but so many triumphs for our party. Whatever was adduced to the advantage of our opponents was contradicted or belittled; and as the opposite faction did the like, it was impossible to meet in the streets without disputes arising, as in *Romeo and Juliet.*

So it was that my sympathies were on the side of Prussia, or more accurately, of Fritz; for what cared we for Prussia? It was the personality of the great King that impressed every one. I rejoiced with my father in our conquests, willingly copied the songs of victory, and perhaps yet more willingly the lampoons directed against the other side, poor as the rhymes might be.

As the eldest grandson and godchild, I had dined every Sunday since my infancy with my grandparents, and the hours so spent were the happiest ones of the whole week. But now I could not enjoy a single morsel, because I was compelled to listen to the most horrible slanders on my hero. The whole atmosphere and tone of the place was different from that of my own home. My affection and even my respect for my grandfather and grandmother diminished. I could say nothing about it to my parents, partly because of my own feelings, and also because my mother had warned me not to do so. In this way I was thrown back upon myself; and as in my sixth year, after the earthquake at Lisbon, my faith in the goodness of God had been shaken, in the same way I now began, *à propos* of Frederick II., to doubt the justice of the public. My heart was naturally inclined to reverence, and it required a great shock to shatter my faith in anything that was venerable. Unfortunately, good manners and proper behavior had been held up before us, not for their own sake, but for the sake of other people.

What would people say? was always the cry, and I thought that people must be really good people, and would know the right and wrong of everything. But my experience was all the other way. The greatest and most signal services were defamed and attacked; the noblest deeds, if not denied, were at least misrepresented and depreciated; and this base injustice was done to the one man who was manifestly superior to all his contemporaries, and who was daily proving and demonstrating his powers,—and not by the populace, but by distinguished men, as I took my grandfather and uncles to be. Of the existence of parties, and that he himself belonged to a party, the boy had no conception. His belief in the justness of his position and the superiority of his opinions was strengthened by the fact that he and those of like mind appreciated the beauty and other good qualities of Maria Theresa, and bore no grudge against the Emperor Francis for his love of jewelry and money. That Count Daun was often called on old dozer, they thought justifiable.

But now that I consider the matter more closely, I can discover here the germ of that disregard and even contempt for the public, which clung to me for a whole period of my life, and only in later days was corrected by insight and culture. Suffice it to say, that even at this early date the consciousness of party injustice had a very unpleasant, even an injurious effect upon the boy, by causing him to keep away from those he loved and honored. The quick succession of military exploits and other events did not allow either party any peace or quiet. We took a malicious delight in reviving and embittering those imaginary wrongs and capricious disputes; and thus we continued to make ourselves unhappy, until a few years later the occupation of Frankfort by the French brought real inconvenience into our homes.

Although to most of us the important events occurring at a distance served only for topics of passionate discussion, there were others who perceived the gravity of the times, and feared that in the case of France joining in the hostilities, our own neighborhood might become the scene of war. We children were kept at home more than before, and various means for occupying and amusing us were devised. To

this end, the puppet-show bequeathed by our grandmother was set up again, and so arranged that the spectators could sit in my gable-room, while the actors and managers of the plays, as well as the stage including the proscenium, were placed in an adjoining room. We were allowed, as a special favor, to invite first one and then another of the neighbors' children as spectators, and thus at the outset I gained many friends; but the restlessness inherent in children made it impossible for them to remain passive spectators for long. They interrupted the play, and we were compelled to seek a younger audience, which could at any rate be kept in order by the nurses and maids. The original drama, for which the marionettes had been specially designed, we had learned by heart, and at first this was the only play we performed. However, we soon wearied of it, we changed the dresses and decorations, and ventured upon various other pieces, on too grand a scale for so small a stage it is true. Although by our ambitiousness we weakened and in the end quite spoiled the effect of our performances, these childish amusements nevertheless developed my powers of invention and representation in various ways, and called my imagination and a certain technical skill into play, to a degree which could not perhaps have been attained in any other way in so short a time, in so confined a space, and at so little expense.

On the other hand, I was far more persevering in arranging an armory with the help of our man-servant (a tailor by trade), for the use of our plays and tragedies, which we delighted in performing ourselves when we had outgrown the puppets. My playfellows, too, manufactured similar suits of armor for themselves, which they considered quite as splendid and as good as mine; but I had not been satisfied with providing for the wants of one person only, and could furnish several of the little band with every requisite, and had thus made myself more and more indispensable to our little circle. That such games led to factions, disputes, and blows, and usually came to a sad end with quarreling and anger, may easily be supposed. In such cases there were some of my companions who generally took my part and others the opposite side; though changes of party frequently occurred. One particular boy, whom I will call Pylades, only once left my

party, at the instigation of the others, and then with difficulty remained in opposition to me for a moment. We were reconciled amid many tears, and for a long time remained faithful friends.

To him, as well as other well-disposed comrades, I could give great pleasure by telling tales, which they liked especially when I was the hero of my own story. It pleased them very much to think that such wonderful things could befall one of their own playfellows; the difficulty I must have in finding time and opportunity for such adventures did not rouse their suspicions, although they must have been pretty well aware of all my comings and goings, and how I spent my time. The scenes, too, of these doings, had to be laid, if not in another world, at least in another locality; and yet all was said to have taken place only to-day or yesterday. Thus they were the victims of their own self-deception rather than of my guile. If I had not gradually learned, in accordance with the instincts of my nature, to work up these visionary shapes and idle fancies into artistic form, such braggadocio beginnings could not have been without ill effects for me.

At the same time I was averse to falsehood and dissimulation, and not at all frivolous. On the contrary, the natural seriousness, with which I had early begun to regard myself and the world, was apparent even in my exterior, and remarks were frequently addressed to me, often in kindness, and often in raillery, on the score of a certain dignity of bearing. For, although I certainly did not lack true and chosen friends, we were always in the minority beside those who took a mischievous delight in rudely molesting us and often roused us in no gentle fashion from those egotistic dreams of a world of romance in which we—I as inventor, and my companions as sympathizers—were only too fond of indulging. Here again we learned that instead of yielding to effeminacy and imaginary delights, there was reason rather for hardening ourselves, in order either to endure or to combat inevitable evils.

In the exercise of stoicism, which I therefore cultivated as seriously as it was possible for a lad, I included the endurance of bodily pain. Our teachers often treated us very

unkindly and roughly, with blows and cuffs, against which we hardened ourselves all the more as insubordination or refractoriness was forbidden under the severest penalties. A great many of the amusements of boys, moreover, depend on a rivalry in endurance of this kind; as, for instance, when they strike each other, with two fingers or the whole fist, till the members are numbed; or when they suffer blows, incurred as a penalty in certain games, with greater or less fortitude; when in wrestling or tussling they do not let themselves be put out by the pinches of a half-conquered opponent; when they stifle the pain which others inflict in order to tease, and even treat with indifference the pinching and tickling which young people so frequently practice upon one another. What we thus gain is of material advantage to ourselves, and it is not easy for others to rob us of it.

Force is most easily put down by force; but a well-disposed child, by nature loving and warm-hearted, has little wherewith to oppose scorn and ill-will. Though I succeeded fairly well in keeping off the active assaults of my companions, I was by no means their equal in taunts and gibes; because in such cases the one on the defensive always has the worst of it. Attacks of this sort, consequently, when they went so far as to rouse my anger, were repelled with physical force, or excited strange reflections in me, which brought other consequences in their train. Among other advantages which my ill-wishers grudged me, was the pleasure I took in the social advantages that accrued to the family from my grandfather's position of *Schultheiss;* for his importance, as first among his equals, was to some extent reflected upon those belonging to him.

The relation of a peaceful citizen to the great events of the world is a curious one. Even from a distance they excite and perturb him, and without coming into actual contact with them, he can scarcely avoid forming an opinion and feeling sympathy. He soon takes the side to which character or external circumstances incline him. But when such large issues, such momentous changes, draw nearer home, then, in addition to many outward inconveniences, the same inward discomfort remains, doubling and intensifying the evil and destroying the good which was still possible. Then friends

and foes cause him real grief, the former often more than the latter, and he is at a loss how to preserve his affections or safeguard his interests.

The year 1757, though spent in perfect civic tranquillity, nevertheless brought us great uneasiness of mind. Perhaps no other year was more fruitful in events. Victories, exploits, disasters, recoveries, followed in succession, one swallowing up the other and canceling its effects; but ever the figure of Frederick, his name and glory, stood out clearly before all else. The enthusiasm of his admirers grew ever stronger and more animated, the hatred of his enemies more bitter, and the diversity of opinion, by which even families were split up, contributed to the further disunion of the burghers who were already divided on various grounds.

The name of KLOPSTOCK already exercised a great influence upon us, even at a distance. At the outset, people wondered how so excellent a man came by so odd a name; but they soon got accustomed to it, and thought no more of the meaning of the syllables. I had hitherto found only the earlier poets in my father's library, especially those who had appeared in his day from time to time and acquired fame. All these had written in rhyme, and my father considered rhyme indispensable to poetical works. Canitz, Hagedorn, Drollinger, Gellert, Creuz, Haller, stood in a row, in handsome calf bindings. Then came Neukirch's *Telemachus,* Kopp's *Jerusalem Delivered,* and other translations. From childhood I had diligently read through all these volumes, and committed portions to memory, and hence I was often called upon to entertain visitors. A period of annoyance, on the other hand, opened for my father on the appearance of Klopstock's *Messiah,* when verses, which did not seem to him verses at all, became the object of general admiration. He had taken good care not to buy this book; but our family friend, Councilor Schneider, smuggled it in and slipped it into the hands of my mother and her children.

This active business-man, who read but little, had been greatly impressed by the *Messiah,* as soon as it appeared. The pious sentiments, so natural in their expression and yet so beautiful in their elevation, the graceful language, even if considered merely as harmonious prose, had so captivated

the dry man of business that he regarded the first ten cantos —for it is with these that we are now concerned—as the sublimest book of devotion, and he was wont once a year in Passion week, when he withdrew from business, to read it through in private, and draw refreshment from it for the whole year. At first he had thoughts of communicating his impressions to his old friend; but he was much shocked to find an incurable dislike to a book of such glorious contents on account of its external form, which to him seemed a matter of indifference. As may be supposed, their conversation often reverted to this topic; but both disputants differed more and more from each other, violent scenes ensued, and the compliant Councilor had at last to make up his mind to say nothing about his favorite work, in order not to lose a friend of his youth and at the same time a good Sunday meal.

It is the most natural wish of every one to make proselytes, and how well repaid did our friend secretly find himself, when he discovered in the rest of the family hearts so favorably disposed to his saint. The copy which he used only one week during the year, was placed at our disposal for the rest of the time. My mother kept it secretly, and we children took possession of it when we could, so that in our leisure hours, hidden away in some corner, we might learn the most striking passages by heart, and, in particular, might memorize the most tender as well as the most impassioned parts as quickly as possible.

We vied with one another in reciting Portia's dream, and divided between us the wild dialogue of despair between Satan and Adrammelech who had been cast into the Red Sea. The first part, as being the most forcible, had been assigned to me, and the second, as being slightly more pathetic, was undertaken by my sister. These reciprocated curses, horrible it is true, but at the same time well-sounding, fell lightly from our lips, and we seized every opportunity to accost each other with these infernal phrases.

It was a Saturday evening, in winter—my father always had himself shaved over night, so that on Sunday morning he might dress himself for church at his ease—we were sitting on a footstool behind the stove, and muttering our customary imprecations in fairly low voices, while the barber was ap-

plying his lather. But now came the moment for Adrammelech to seize Satan with iron hands; my sister gripped me violently, and recited, softly enough, but with rising passion:—

"Lend me thine aid, I implore, I will worship thee, if thou demand it,
Thee, thou monster abandoned, yea thee, thou swart evildoer;
Aid me, I suffer the tortures of death, which is vengeful, eternal,
Once, in the times gone by, with a hot fierce hate I could hate thee,
Now I can hate thee no more! E'en this is the sharpest of tortures."

So far all had gone well; but loudly, with a dreadful voice, she cried the following words:—

"O, how am I crushed!"

The good surgeon was startled, and emptied the basin of soapsuds into my father's bosom. There was a great uproar, and a strict investigation was held, especially in view of the disaster which might have occurred if the shaving had been actually in process. In order to prove that we had meant no harm, we confessed our Satanic characters, and the mischief done by the hexameters was so apparent, that, naturally, they were again condemned and banished.

Thus children and common people are accustomed to transform the great and sublime into a sport, and even a jest; and how else indeed could they endure it?

## THIRD BOOK

At that time the general interchange of personal good wishes made the city very lively on New Year's day. People who as a rule found it difficult to leave home, donned their best clothes, that for the nonce they might show friendliness and civility to their friends and patrons. The festivities at my grandfather's house on this day were a particularly welcome treat to us children. Early dawn found the grandchildren

already assembled there to hear the drums, oboes, clarionets, trumpets, and cornets played upon by the military, the town musicians, and whoever else contributed to the music. The New Year's gifts, sealed and addressed, were distributed by us children among the humbler congratulators, and, as the day advanced, the number of those of higher rank increased. The relations and intimate friends appeared first, then the subordinate officials; even the gentlemen of the Council did not fail to pay their respects to the *Schultheiss,* and a select number were entertained in the evening in rooms which were hardly ever opened throughout the year. The cakes, biscuits, marchpane, and sweet wine had the greatest charm for the children, and, besides, the *Schultheiss* and the two Burgomasters were annually presented by certain institutions with some silver plate, which was then bestowed upon the grandchildren and godchildren in regular order. In fine, this miniature festival was not without any of those attributes which usually glorify the greatest.

The New Year's day of 1759 approached, as welcome and delightful to us children as any preceding one, but full of anxiety and foreboding to older persons. It is true we had become accustomed to the marching through of French troops: it was a common occurrence, but had been most frequent in the last days of the past year. According to the ancient usage of an imperial town, the warder of the chief tower sounded his trumpet whenever troops approached, and on this New Year's day he never left off at all, which was a sign that large bodies of men were in motion on several sides. They did, as a matter of fact, march through the city in great masses on this day, and the people ran to see them pass by. At other times we had been used to see them march through in small detachments, but now they gradually increased in size without any one's being able or willing to hinder it. In short, on the 2nd of January, after a column had come through Sachsenhausen over the bridge, through the Fahrgasse, as far as the Police Guard House—it halted, overpowered the small detachment which escorted it, took possession of the Guard House just mentioned, marched down the Zeil, and, after a slight resistance, forced the main guard also to yield. In a moment the peaceful streets were trans-

formed into a scene of war. The troops remained and bivouacked there, until quarters were assigned them by regular billeting.

This unexpected burden, unheard of for years past, weighed heavily upon the ease-loving citizens, and to none could it have been more irksome than to my father, who was obliged to take foreign soldiers into his barely finished house, to give up to them his well-furnished reception rooms, which were usually kept shut up, and to hand over to the tender mercies of strangers all that he had been accustomed to arrange and manage with such care. Siding as he did with the Prussians, he was now to find himself besieged in his own chambers by the French;—it was, according to his way of thinking, the greatest misfortune that could happen to him. If it had only been possible for him to take the matter more easily, he might have saved himself and us many sad hours, since he spoke French well and could deport himself with dignity and grace in daily life. For it was the King's Lieutenant who was quartered on us, and although he was a military official, it was only civil matters, such as disputes between soldiers and citizens and questions of debt and quarrels that he had to settle. This was the Count Thorane, a native of Grasse in Provence, not far from Antibes; a tall, thin, grave figure, with a face much disfigured by the smallpox, black fiery eyes, and a dignified, self-contained demeanor. His very first entrance was propitious for the inmates of the house. The various apartments were discussed, some of which were to be given up and others retained by the family; and when the Count heard a picture-room mentioned, although it was already dark, he immediately requested permission to give at least a hasty look at the pictures by candlelight. He took extreme pleasure in these things, behaved in the most courteous manner to my father who accompanied him, and when he heard that the majority of the artists were still living and resident in Frankfort and its neighborhood, he assured us that he desired nothing more than to make their acquaintance as soon as possible, and to employ them.

But even this sympathy in respect to art could not change my father's feelings nor soften his inflexibility. He acquiesced in what he could not prevent, but remained aloof and

inactive, and the unwonted state of things around him was intolerable to him, even to the veriest trifle.

Count Thorane, meanwhile, behaved in an exemplary manner. He would not even have his maps nailed on the walls, for fear of injuring the new hangings. His servants were capable, quiet, and orderly; but, seeing that he was never left in peace all day long and part of the night, one complainant quickly following another, persons under arrest being brought in and led out, and all officers and adjutants being admitted to his presence; seeing, furthermore, that the Count kept open table every day; naturally the moderate-sized house, planned only for a family, and with but one open staircase running from top to bottom, was pervaded with a movement and a buzzing like that in a beehive, although everything was under ordered, thoughtful, and strict control.

As mediator between the irritable master of the house—who became daily more of a hypochondriac and a burden to himself—and his well-meaning, but grave and precise military guest, there was, fortunately, an easy-going interpreter, a handsome, corpulent, cheerful man, who was a citizen of Frankfort, spoke French well, could adapt himself to all circumstances, and only made a jest of many little annoyances. Through him my mother had sent a representation to the Count of the situation in which she was placed, owing to her husband's state of mind. He described the situation with great skill—explaining that the new house was still in some disorder, that the owner was naturally reserved and occupied with the education of his family, with much more to the same effect; and the Count, who on his part took the greatest pride in absolute justice, integrity, and honorable conduct, resolved here also to behave in an exemplary manner to those upon whom he was quartered, and, in fact, never swerved from this resolution in spite of changing circumstances during the several years he stayed with us.

It now seems necessary to explain in greater detail how I managed to make my way, under these circumstances, more or less easily, with the French language, without having ever learned it. Here, again, I was helped by a natural aptitude which enabled me to catch easily the sound of a language, its

movement, accent, tone, and all other outward peculiarities. I knew many words from the Latin; Italian supplied still more; and by listening to servants and soldiers, sentries and visitors, I soon picked up so much that, if I could not join in conversation, I could at any rate understand single questions and answer them. All this, however, was trifling compared to the profit I derived from the theater. My grandfather had given me a free ticket, which I used daily, with my father's disapproval, but with my mother's support. There I sat in the pit, before a foreign stage, and watched the movements and the expression both of gesture and speech the more narrowly as I understood little or nothing of what was being said, and therefore could only derive entertainment from the action and the intonation. I understood least of comedy, because it was spoken rapidly, and related to matters of everyday life, the phrases of which were unknown to me. Tragedy was not played so often, and the measured flow and rhythm of the alexandrines, the generality of the sentiments expressed, made it more intelligible to me in every way. It was not long before I took up Racine, which I found in my father's library, and declaimed the plays to myself, in theatrical style, as my organs of hearing and speech, with their intimate connection, had assimilated them, and this I did with considerable animation, without being able to understand a single connected speech. I even learned entire passages by rote, and repeated them like a parrot, which was the easier to me from having previously been in the habit of committing to memory passages from the Bible which are generally unintelligible to a child, and then reciting them in the tone of Protestant preachers.

From the first day of the occupation of our city, incessant diversion might be had, especially for children and young people. Plays and balls, parades, and the marching through of troops, drew our attention hither and thither. The numbers passing through were always on the increase, and the soldiers' life seemed to us a merry and attractive one.

The residence of the King's Lieutenant in our house procured us the advantage of gradually seeing all the distinguished members of the French army, and especially of inspecting at close quarters the commanders, whose names

were already known to us by reputation. It was quite easy for us to look down from staircases and landings, as though they had been galleries, upon the generals who passed by. In particular I remember the PRINCE SOUBISE as a handsome, affable gentleman, but most distinctly of all the MARECHAL DE BROGLIO, who was a younger man, not tall, but well-built, lively, and quick, with intelligent eyes for what was passing around him.

He came frequently to the King's Lieutenant, and it was obvious that weighty matters were discussed. By the end of the first three months we were just beginning to get accustomed to having strangers quartered upon us, when a vague rumor was circulated that the Allies were on the march, and that Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick was coming to drive the French from the Main. A poor opinion was held of the latter, as they had not been particularly successful in the war, and after the battle of Rossbach there seemed reason for despising them. Duke Ferdinand enjoyed the greatest confidence, and all who were Prussian in their sympathies awaited with eagerness their deliverance from the yoke hitherto borne. My father was in somewhat better spirits—my mother was apprehensive. She was wise enough to see that a slight present discomfort might easily be exchanged for a great disaster; for it was but too plain that the French would not advance to meet the Duke, but would wait to be attacked in the neighborhood of the city. A defeat of the French, their flight, the defense of the city, if it were only to cover their retreat and to hold the bridge, a bombardment, a general pillage—all these possibilities presented themselves to the excited imagination, and were cause of anxiety to both parties. My mother, who could bear everything but suspense, imparted her fears to the Count through the interpreter. She received the usual answer in such cases: she might be quite easy, for there was nothing to fear, and should keep quiet and mention the matter to no one.

Many troops passed through the city; we learned that they had halted at Bergen. The coming and going, the riding and running constantly increased, and our house was in an uproar day and night. At this time I often saw Maréchal de Broglio, always cheerful, always the same in look and man-

ner, and I was afterwards pleased to find the man, whose appearance had made such a good and lasting impression upon me, honorably mentioned in history.

Thus, after an unquiet Passion week, the Good Friday of 1759 arrived. A profound stillness announced the approaching storm. We children were forbidden to quit the house: my father could not rest, and went out. The battle began: I went up into the garret, where, though I could not see the country round, I could plainly hear the thunder of cannons and the volleying of musketry. After some hours we saw the first evidences of the battle in a line of wagons, in which the wounded, sadly mutilated, and groaning with pain, were slowly driven past us, to be taken to the convent of St. Mary, now transformed into a hospital. The compassion of the citizens was instantly called forth. Beer, wine, bread, and money were distributed to such as were in a condition to receive them. But when shortly afterwards wounded and captive Germans were seen in the train, pity knew no limits, and it seemed as if every one were anxious to divest himself of all his goods and chattels to assist his suffering countrymen.

The prisoners, however, were an indication that the battle was going against the Allies. My father, whose party feelings made him quite certain that they would come off victorious, had the reckless temerity to go forth to meet the expected victors, without thinking that the defeated party must run over him in their flight. He first repaired to his garden outside the Friedberg Gate, where he found everything quiet and deserted; then he ventured on to the Bornheim Heath, where he soon descried various stragglers and camp followers, amusing themselves by shooting at the boundary-stones, so that the rebounding bullets whizzed about the head of the inquisitive wanderer. He therefore considered it more prudent to go back, and learned on inquiry—as the sound of firing might have convinced him—that all stood well for the French, and that there was no thought of retreating. Reaching home out of temper, the sight of his wounded and captured countrymen made him altogether lose his usual self-control. He, too, caused various donations to be given to the passers-by, but only Germans were to have them, which

was not always practicable, as fate had packed together friend and foe in the same wagon.

After such disturbances, turmoil, and troubles, we soon returned to the security and thoughtlessness in which young people, especially, live from day to day, if it be at all possible. My passion for the French theater grew with every performance. I did not miss a single evening, although, when I sat down with the family to supper after the play—often satisfied with scanty remains—I had to endure the invariable reproaches of my father, that theaters were useless, and would lead to nothing. In these cases I adduced all and every available argument used by apologists of the stage when they find themselves in a difficulty such as mine. Vice in prosperity and virtue in misfortune are in the end set right by poetical justice. I laid stress on those beautiful examples of misdeeds punished, *Miss Sara Sampson,* and *The Merchant of London;* but, on the other hand, I often came off worst when *Les Fourberies de Scapin,* and similar plays, appeared on the program, and I was twitted with the delight taken by the public in the impostures of intriguing servants, and the successful escapades of dissolute youths. Neither side convinced the other, but my father was very soon reconciled to the theater when he saw with what incredible rapidity I was acquiring the French language.

Men are so constituted that everybody is anxious to try his own hand at whatever he sees others doing, whether he has aptitude for it or not. I had soon covered the whole range of the French stage; several pieces were being given for the second and third times; all had passed before my eyes and mind, from the stateliest tragedy to the most frivolous afterpiece; and just as when a child I had presumed to imitate Terence, so now as a boy I did not fail, on much greater incitement, to copy the French forms to the best of my ability and inability. At that time some half-mythological, half-allegorical pieces in the taste of Piron were being acted; they had something of the nature of parody about them, and were very popular. These representations had a particular attraction for me: the little gold wings of a sprightly Mercury, the thunderbolt of a disguised Jupiter, an amorous Danaë, or whatever the name of the fair one

visited by the gods might be, if indeed it were not a shepherdess or huntress to whom they stooped. And as figures of this kind, from *Ovid's Metamorphoses,* or the *Pantheon Mythicum* of Pomey, very often flitted through my head—I had soon put together a little play of the same kind in imagination, of which I only remember that the scene was rural, but at the same time kings' daughters, princes, and gods appeared in it. Mercury, especially, was so vividly before my mind's eye, that I could almost swear to having actually seen him.

## FOURTH BOOK

Much inconvenience as the quartering of the French had occasioned us, we had become so accustomed to it, that we could not fail to miss it, nor could we children help feeling the house deserted. Moreover, we were not to return to undisturbed family unity. Arrangements had already been made with new lodgers, and after a certain amount of sweeping and scouring, planing and polishing, painting and whitewashing, the house was completely restored. The *Kanzleidirektor*[1] Moritz, with his family, very valued friends of my parents, moved in. He was not a native of Frankfort, but an able jurist and man of business, and transacted the legal business of many minor princes, counts, and noblemen. I never saw him otherwise than cheerful and pleasant, and busy with his law papers. His wife and children, though gentle, quiet, and amiable, did not, as a matter of fact, increase the sociableness of our house, for they kept very much to themselves; but a stillness, a peace returned, such as we had not enjoyed for a long time. I now occupied my attic once more, and though the ghosts of the many pictures sometimes haunted me, I endeavored to banish them by work and study.

Another Moritz, a brother of the *Kanzleidirektor,* who was Councilor to the Danish Legation, from this time often came to our house. He was more a man of the world, had a handsome figure, while his manners were easy and agreeable. He too transacted business for various persons of rank, and in

[1] *Kanzleidirektor* = chief administrator of an estate belonging to a nobleman inferior to a prince.

connection with meetings of creditors and imperial commissions frequently came into contact with my father. They had a high opinion of each other, and usually took the side of the creditors, though they generally discovered, to their annoyance, that the majority of the commissioners on such occasions are usually won over to the side of the debtors. The Councilor of Legation liked to communicate his knowledge; he was a lover of mathematics, and as he had no occasion to use them in his present walk of life, it gave him pleasure to help me in this branch of study. I was thus enabled to work out my architectural sketches more accurately than heretofore, and to profit more by the instruction of a drawing-master, who now provided us with an hour's daily occupation.

This worthy old man was indeed but half an artist. He made us draw strokes, join them together, and from these were to be evolved eyes and noses, lips and ears, nay, in the end, whole faces and heads; but natural or artistic form was never thought of in the process. We were tormented a long while with the *qui pro quo* of the human figure, and when the so-called Passions of Le Brun were given us to copy, it was supposed that we were really getting on at last. But even these caricatures did not improve us. Then we went on to landscapes, foliage, and all the things which in ordinary instruction are practiced without logical sequence or method. Finally we gave ourselves up to close imitation and neatness of stroke, without troubling ourselves about the merit or taste of the original.

In these attempts our father led the way in an exemplary manner. He had never drawn, but he was unwilling to be left behind now that his children were pursuing this art, and desired, even in his old age, to set a example as to how they should proceed in their youth. He therefore copied several heads of Piazzetta, from his well-known small octavo sheets, with an English lead-pencil upon the finest Dutch paper. In these he not only observed the greatest clearness of outline, but most accurately imitated the hatching of the copper-plate with a light hand—only too slightly, as in his desire to avoid hardness he made no contrast between light and shade in his sketches. Yet they always showed delicate handling and un-

remitting care. His persistent and untiring assiduity went so far that he copied the whole considerable collection, number by number, while we children jumped from one head to another, and chose only those that pleased us.

About this time the long-debated project for giving us lessons in music was carried into effect; and the final inducement deserves special mention. It was settled that we should learn the harpsichord; but the choice of a master had been a constant subject of dispute. At last I happened to go into the room of one of my companions, who was just having a lesson on the harpsichord, and discovered that the teacher was a most charming man. For each finger of the right and left hand he had a nickname by which he called it, in the most amusing way, whenever it had to be used. The black and white keys, likewise, had symbolical names, and even the notes appeared under figurative appellations. Such a motley company worked together most pleasantly. Fingering and time seemed to become perfectly easy and obvious, and since the scholar was put into the best of humors, everything went excellently.

Scarcely had I reached home, than I importuned my parents to immediately set about the matter in good earnest, and let us have this incomparable man for our master on the harpsichord. They hesitated, and made inquiries; they did not hear anything bad of the teacher; but, at the same time, nothing particularly good. Meanwhile I had related all the droll names to my sister; we could hardly wait for the lessons to begin, and succeeded in having the man engaged.

The reading of the notes began first, but as no jokes occurred here, we comforted ourselves with the hope that when we came to the harpsichord, and the fingers were needed, the jocular method would commence. But neither keys nor fingering seemed to afford opportunity for any comparisons. Dry as the notes were, with their dots on and between the five lines, the black and white keys were no less so: and not a syllable was heard either of "thumbling," "pointerling," or "goldfinger," while the countenance of the man remained as imperturbable during his dry teaching as it had been before during his dry jests. My sister reproached me most bitterly for having deceived her, and actually believed that it was all

an invention of mine. But I was myself nonplussed and learned little, though the man went to work systematically enough: for I kept on expecting that the former jokes would make their appearance, and consoled my sister with this hope from day to day. They did not reappear, however, and I should never have been able to explain the riddle, if another accident had not solved it for me.

One of my playmates came in during a lesson, and at once the fountain of humor began to play in full force; the "thumblings" and "pointerlings," the "crawlers" and "sprawlers," as he used to call the fingers, the "Fakchen" and "Gakchen," meaning "f" and "g," the "Fiekchen" and "Giekchen," meaning "f" and "g" sharp, made their appearance once more, and played the part of the most wonderful mannikins. My young friend could not leave off laughing, and was delighted that it was possible to learn so much in such an amusing way. He vowed he would leave his parents no peace until they let him have such an excellent man for a teacher.

And thus, in accordance with the principles of a modern theory of education, the way to two arts was early opened to me, merely at haphazard, and without any conviction that I had natural talent to help me on in either. My father maintained that everybody ought to learn drawing; for which reason he especially venerated the Emperor Maximilian, who is said to have given express command to this effect. He therefore kept me to it more steadily than to music, which, on the other hand, he especially recommended to my sister, and in addition to her lesson-hours, kept her busy at her harpsichord during a good part of the day.

To ensure that we children should not be cut off from life and learning of any kind, an English master must needs announce himself just at this time, who pledged himself to teach English to anybody not entirely untrained in languages, within four weeks, and enable him to reach a stage at which, with a certain amount of industry, he could go on by himself. He was content with a moderate fee; the number of pupils at one lesson made no difference to him. My father instantly determined to make the experiment, and took lessons, with my sister and myself, from this expeditious master. The lessons

were given conscientiously; nor did we fail to go over the work; other tasks were neglected rather than this, during the four weeks; and the teacher parted from us, and we from him, with satisfaction. As he remained in the town for some time, and found many employers, he came from time to time to see how we were getting on, and to help us, grateful that we had been among the first who placed confidence in him, and proud to be able to cite us as examples to the others.

My father, in consequence, felt a new anxiety that English should retain its proper place among my other linguistic studies. Now, I will confess that it became more and more irksome to me to take my subjects for study now from this grammar or collection of examples, now from that; now from one author, now from another, and so fritter away my interest in the subjects as well as in the lessons. It occurred to me, therefore, that I might kill several birds with one stone by inventing a romance about six or seven brothers and sisters who lived at a distance from one another in various parts of the world, and sent one another news as to their circumstances and impressions. The eldest brother gives an account in good German of various subjects and incidents connected with his journey. The sister, in a feminine style, with short sentences and incessant full-stops, after the manner of *Siegwart* at a later date, writes answers, now to him, now to the other brothers, partly about domestic matters, and partly about affairs of the heart. One brother studies theology, and writes a very formal Latin, to which he often adds a Greek postscript. To another brother, a clerk in a business house in Hamburg, the English correspondence naturally falls, while to a younger one living at Marseilles is intrusted the French. For Italian there was found a musician, just making a start in life; while the youngest, a sort of pert nestling, had applied himself to Jew-German, as the other languages were already appropriated, and by his frightful ciphers reduced the others to despair, and made my parents laugh heartily at the happy idea.

I sought for matter to fill in this strange frame-work by studying the geography of the countries in which my creations resided, and by investing those dry localities with all sorts of human interests having some connection with the

characters and occupations of my heroes. Thus my exercise-books became much more voluminous, my father was better satisfied, and I was much sooner made aware of the gaps in my knowledge and acquirements.

Now, things of this kind once begun are apt to outgrow all limits, and so it was in the present case; for, when I endeavored to acquire the odd Jew-German, and to write it as well as I could read it, I soon discovered that I ought to know Hebrew, by the aid of which alone the modern corrupted and degenerate dialect could be derived and treated with any certainty. I therefore explained the necessity of my learning Hebrew to my father, and earnestly besought his consent, for I had besides a higher end in view. I heard it said on all hands that a knowledge of the original languages was requisite to understand both the Old Testament and the New. The latter I could read quite easily, because, in order that even Sunday should not be without its appointed tasks, the so-called Gospels and Epistles had, after church, to be recited, translated, and explained to some extent. I now designed doing the same thing with the Old Testament, the peculiar character of which had always especially appealed to me.

My father, who did not like to do anything by halves, made up his mind to ask the rector of our *Gymnasium*, one Dr. Albrecht, to give me private lessons weekly, until I should have acquired the essential elements of so simple a language, for he hoped that if it could not be mastered as quickly as English, it could at any rate be managed in double the time.

Rector Albrecht was one of the most original figures in the world, short, not fat, but broad, misshapen without being deformed,—in short, an Æsop in gown and wig. His face of over seventy years was distorted into a sarcastic smile, while his eyes remained large, and, though red, were always brilliant and intelligent.

In spite of all my willingness, I did not get at what I wanted without its costing me something, for my teacher could not suppress certain sarcastic remarks as to what I really wanted with Hebrew. I concealed from him my designs with regard to Jew-German, and spoke of a better understanding of the original text. He smiled at this, and said I ought

to be satisfied if I only learned to read. This vexed me in secret, and I concentrated all my attention when we came to the letters. I found an alphabet something like the Greek, of which the forms were easy, and the names, for the most part, not new to me. All this I had quickly understood and learned, and supposed we should now begin to read. This, I was well aware, was done from right to left. But now, all at once appeared a new army of little characters and signs, of points and strokes of all sorts, which were in fact to represent vowels. At this I wondered the more, as there were manifestly vowels in the larger alphabet, and the others only appeared to be hidden under strange appellations. I was also taught, that the Jewish nation, so long as it flourished, had, in point of fact, been content with the first signs, and had known no other way of writing and reading. I should have liked very much to have gone on along this ancient, and, as it seemed to me, easier path; but my worthy instructor declared rather sternly, that we must be guided by the grammar in its generally accepted form. Reading without these points and strokes, he said, was a very difficult matter, and could only be undertaken by the learned, and the most highly trained scholars. I must therefore make up my mind to learn these little characters; but this only made confusion worse confounded. At one time, it seemed, some of the primary and larger letters were to have no significance where they stood, simply that their little after-born kindred might not stand useless. At another time they were to indicate a gentle breathing, then a guttural, more or less harsh, or again they were merely pegs on which to hang the others. But, finally, when one fancied that one had taken in everything properly, some of these personages, both large and small, were made sleeping partners, and became inactive, so that one's eyes always had very much, and one's lips very little, to do.

Let a man turn whither he will, and take in hand whatsoever he please, he will always return to the path marked out for him by nature. So it fared with me, too, in the present case. My endeavors with regard to the language, to the contents of the Sacred Scriptures even, finally resulted in producing in my imagination a more vivid picture of that beautiful and highly praised land, its surroundings and neighbor-

ing countries, as well as of the people and events which shed a glory over that little spot of earth for thousands of years.

Amid all these heterogeneous occupations and tasks, which followed each other so rapidly that one could hardly reflect whether they were desirable and useful, my father never lost sight of his main object. He endeavored to direct my memory and my powers of apprehension and synthesis to legal matters, and therefore gave me a small book by HOPPE, in the shape of a catechism, composed in accordance with the form and substance of the *Institutiones*. I soon learned questions and answers by heart, and could say the part of the catechist as well as of the catechumen; and, as in religious instruction at that time one of the chief exercises was to find passages in the Bible as readily as possible, so a similar acquaintance with the *Corpus Juris* was deemed necessary, and in this, too, I very soon became quite proficient. My father wished me to go further, and the little STRUVE was taken in hand; but here progress was not so rapid. The form of the work was not such as to encourage beginners to go on by themselves, nor was my father's manner of teaching so genial as greatly to interest me.

Not only the warlike state of the times during the last few years, but also civil life itself, and the perusal of history and romances, had made it only too clear to us that there were many cases in which the laws are silent and give no help to the individual, who must then extricate himself from his difficulty as he best may. We had now reached the period when, according to the accepted routine, we were, in addition to other things, to learn to fence and ride, so that we should know how to defend ourselves upon occasion, and avoid cutting a ridiculous figure on horseback. As to the fencing, the exercise greatly pleased us; for we had already, long ago, managed to get hold of broad-swords made of hazel-sticks, with basket-hilts neatly woven of osiers to protect the hands. Now we were allowed to have real steel blades, and the clashing we made with them was very lively.

Though my father was not fond of spending money on anything which afforded only a momentary enjoyment—I can scarcely remember that we ever drove out together and spent anything in a place of amusement—he was, on the other

hand, not niggardly in purchasing such things as presented a good external appearance besides possessing intrinsic worth. No one could look forward to peace more than he, although he had not suffered the slightest inconvenience during the last period of the war. Such being his views, he had promised my mother a gold snuff-box, set with diamonds, which she was to receive as soon as peace should be publicly declared. In expectation of the happy event, this present had been put in hand some years ago. The box, which was tolerably large, had been executed in Hanau, for my father was on good terms with the gold-workers there, as well as with the managers of the silk-nursery. Many designs were made for it; the cover was adorned by a basket of flowers, over which hovered a dove with the olive-branch. A vacant space was left for the jewels, which were to be set partly in the dove and partly in the flowers, partly too on the spot where the box is usually opened. The jeweler to whom the execution and the requisite stones were entrusted was named Lautensack, and was a skillful, cheery man, who, like many clever artists, seldom did what was necessary, but usually carried out his fancies which gave him pleasure. The jewels were very soon set, in the shape in which they were to be put upon the box, on some black wax, and looked very well; but there they stuck, and it was impossible to get them transferred to the gold. At the outset, my father let the matter rest; but as the hope of peace grew stronger, and finally when the details of the conditions—in particular the elevation of the Archduke Joseph to the Roman throne—were supposed to be generally known, he grew more and more impatient, and I had to go several times a week, nay, at last, almost daily, to visit the dilatory artist. Thanks to my constant worrying and exhortation, the work went on, though slowly enough; for as it was of the kind which can be taken in hand or laid aside at will, something of greater importance was always cropping up for the sake of which it was set aside.

The chief cause of this conduct, however, was a task which the artist had undertaken on his own account. Everybody knew that the Emperor Francis had a particular affection for jewels, and especially for colored stones. Lautensack had expended a considerable sum, and as it afterwards proved, more

than he could afford, on such gems, out of which he had begun to shape a nosegay, in which every stone was to be arranged so as to show off its shape and color to best advantage, and the whole was to form a work of art worthy to take its place in the jewel-room of an emperor. He had, in his desultory way, worked at it for many years, and now hastened to complete it and put it together finally, since, when the looked-for peace should be declared, the Emperor was expected to come to Frankfort for the coronation of his son. He cleverly took advantage of my interest in such matters to divert my attention from my message of exhortation, and to lure me from my purpose. He strove to impart a knowledge of these stones to me, and pointed out to me their properties and value, so that in the end I knew his whole bouquet by heart, and could have shown off its beauties to a customer quite as well as he. I can remember it even now, and though I may have since seen more costly specimens of magnificence in this sort, I have never seen a more charming one. He possessed, besides, a pretty collection of engravings, and other works of art, about which he liked to talk, and I passed many hours with him, not without profit. Finally, when the Congress of Hubertsburg was finally fixed, he made a special effort for my sake; and the dove and flowers actually reached my mother's hands on the festival in celebration of peace.

## FIFTH BOOK

Every bird has its decoy, and every man is led and misled in a way peculiar to himself. Nature, education, circumstances, and habit kept me apart from all that was coarse; and though I often came into contact with the lower classes, particularly with mechanics, no close intimacy grew out of it. I had indeed boldness enough to prompt me to uncommon and perhaps dangerous undertakings, and often felt drawn to them; but I lacked the capacity for seizing and holding the favorable opportunity.

Meanwhile I was quite unexpectedly involved in an affair which brought me near to a great danger, and, for a time at least, into perplexity and distress. The friendly intercourse which I had had with the boy whom they called Pylades continued beyond my childish days. We indeed saw

each other less often, because our parents were not on the best of terms; but when we did meet, the old warmth of friendship revived immediately. Once we met in the pleasant walk made by the avenues between the outer and inner gate of St. Gallus. We had scarcely exchanged greetings, when he said to me, "I have had the same experience as ever about your verses. I read aloud those you recently showed me to some good comrades of mine, and not one of them will believe that you have written them." "Do not let that trouble us," I answered; "we will write them and enjoy them, and the others may think and say of them what they please."

"Here comes the unbeliever himself," added my friend. "We will not speak of it," I replied; "what is the use? One cannot convert them." "By no means," said my friend; "I cannot let him off so easily."

After a short conversation on indifferent topics, my young comrade, who was but too well disposed towards me, could not suffer the matter to drop without saying to the other, with some resentment, "Here is my friend who made those pretty verses, for which you will not give him credit!" "He will certainly not be offended at that," answered the other, "for we do him an honor when we suppose that more learning is required to make such verses than one of his years can possess." I made some casual answer; but my friend continued, "It will not be very difficult to convince you. Give him any theme, and he will improvise you a poem on the spot." I fell in with the proposal, and the other asked me whether I would venture to compose a pretty love-letter in rhyme, which a modest young woman might be supposed to write to a young man, to declare her inclination. "Nothing could be easier," I answered, "if I only had writing materials." He pulled out his pocket almanac, in which there were a great many blank leaves, and I sat down upon a bench to write. They walked about in the meanwhile, but always kept me in sight. I immediately brought my imagination to bear on the situation, and thought how pleasant it would be if some pretty girl were really attached to me, and wished to reveal her sentiments to me, either in prose or verse. I therefore began my declaration without delay, and in a very short time produced some verses, in form between doggerel

and madrigal, and as simple as possible in style, which, when read aloud, filled the skeptic with astonishment, and my friend with delight. The former expressed his desire to keep the poem, and I could hardly refuse, seeing that it was written in his almanac; besides, I was glad to leave such documentary evidence of my capabilities in his hands. He left us with many assurances of admiration and respect, saying he wished for nothing more than that we should often meet; so we settled soon to go together into the country.

Our party actually took place, and was joined by several more young people of the same sort. They belonged to the middle, or, if you will, to the lower classes, and were not wanting in brains, and moreover, thanks to their school education, were fairly well informed and had a certain degree of culture. In a large, rich city there are many modes of gaining a livelihood, and they supported themselves by copying for the lawyers, and by giving the children of the lower orders more advanced instruction than that of the elementary schools. They helped to prepare the older children, who were to be confirmed; then, again, they went errands for factors and merchants, and were thus enabled to enjoy themselves frugally in the evenings, and particularly on Sundays and festivals.

On the way out, while they highly extolled my love-letter, they confessed to me that they had made use of it in a merry jest, viz.—they had copied it in a feigned hand, and, with a few pertinent allusions, had sent it to a conceited young man, who was now firmly persuaded that a lady to whom he had paid distant court was excessively enamored of him, and sought an opportunity for closer acquaintance. At the same time, they told me in confidence that he now desired nothing more than to be able to answer her in verse; but that neither he nor they had any ability in that direction, so that they earnestly begged me to compose the much-desired reply.

Mystifications are and will continue to be an amusement for idle, more or less intelligent people. A pardonable love of mischief, a malicious spirit of provocation form the delight of those who have neither resources in themselves nor a wholesome external activity. No age is quite above such trivial

pleasures. We had often tricked each other in our childish years; many games turned upon such mystifications and tricks. The present jest did not seem to me of any greater consequence; I gave my consent. They informed me of many particulars which the letter ought to contain, and we brought it home already finished.

A little while afterwards I was urgently invited, through my friend, to be present at one of the evening gatherings of that society. The lover, he said, was willing to bear the expense on this occasion, and desired expressly to thank the friend who had shown himself so excellent a poetical secretary.

We assembled late enough, the meal was most frugal, the wine drinkable: while as for the conversation, it consisted almost entirely of jokes at the expense of our very foolish young host, who, after repeated readings of the letter, almost believed that he had written it himself.

My natural good-nature would not allow me to take much pleasure in such a malicious deception, and the continual harping on this one theme soon disgusted me. I should certainly have passed a tedious evening, if an unexpected arrival had not revived me. On our entrance the table was already neatly and tidily set, and sufficient wine had been served; so we sat down, and were left to ourselves, without requiring any attendance. However, as the wine ran short at last, one of them called for the maid; but instead of the maid there came a girl of uncommon, and, when contrasted with her surroundings, of astonishing beauty. "What is it you want?" she asked, after a friendly greeting; "the maid is ill in bed. Can I serve you?" "The wine has run short," said one; "if you would fetch us a few bottles, it would be very kind of you." "Do, Gretchen," said another, "it is only a step or two." "Why not?" she answered, and, taking a few empty bottles from the table, she hastened out. Her appearance, as she turned her back on us, was even more attractive. The little cap sat so neatly upon her little head, poised gracefully in its turn upon a slender throat. Her whole person breathed a peculiar charm which could be more fully appreciated when one's attention was no longer exclusively attracted and fettered by the clear, calm eyes and lovely mouth.

I reproved my comrades for sending the girl out alone at night, but they only laughed at me, and I was soon consoled by her return, as the publican lived only just across the way. "Sit down with us, as a reward," said one. She did so; but, alas, she did not come near me. She drank a glass to our health, and left us, advising us not to carry on our revels too late into the night, and not to be so noisy, as her mother was just going to bed. It was not, however, her own mother, but the mother of our hosts.

This girl's image never left me from that moment; it was the first durable impression made upon me by any woman; and as I could find no pretext to see her at home, and would not seek one, I went to church for love of her, and soon discovered where she sat. Thus, during the long Protestant service, I gazed my fill at her. When the congregation left the church I did not venture to accost her, much less to accompany her, and was perfectly delighted if she seemed to observe me and to return my greeting with a nod. Yet I was not long denied the happiness of approaching her. They had persuaded the suitor, whose poetical secretary I had been, that the letter written in his name had been actually sent to the lady, so that he lived in daily expectation of an answer. It was intended that I should write this too; and the roguish conspirators entreated me earnestly, through Pylades, to exert all my wit and employ all my art, to make this composition a masterpiece of elegance.

In the hope of again seeing my fair one, I set to work immediately, and thought of everything that would please me most if Gretchen were writing it to me. I seemed to have expressed myself so completely after her form, her nature, her manner, and her mind, that I could not refrain from wishing that it were so in reality, and lost myself in rapture at the mere thought that something similar could be sent from her to me. Thus I deluded myself, while I intended to impose upon another; and so laid myself open to much joy and to much trouble. By the time I was once more summoned, my work was ready; I promised to come, and did not fail at the appointed hour. Only one of the young men was at home; Gretchen sat at the window spinning; the mother was busy about the house. The young man asked me to read it aloud

to him; I complied, not without emotion, glancing at intervals from the paper at the beautiful girl before me; and, as I read, the slight uneasiness and faint flush I seemed to notice only helped me to render with more zest and fire those words which I would fain have heard from her own lips. The cousin, who had often interrupted me with commendations, at last entreated me to make some improvements. These concerned some passages which indeed were rather adapted to Gretchen's condition than to that of the lady in question, who was of a good family, wealthy, and known and respected in the city. The young man then pointed out the desired changes, brought me writing materials, and took his leave for a short time to attend to some business matters. I remained sitting on the bench against the wall, behind the large table, and made an attempt at the alterations that were to be made, using for the purpose the large slate, which almost covered the whole table, and a pencil that always lay in the window, both of which were used to jot down reckonings or memoranda of various kinds, or even as a means of communication between incoming and outgoing guests.

I had for a while written different things and rubbed them out again, when I exclaimed impatiently, "It will not do!" "So much the better," the girl said gravely; "I am glad it will not do. You should not meddle in such matters." She arose from the distaff, and stepping towards the table, gave me a severe lecture, with a great deal of good sense and kindliness. "The thing seems an innocent jest; it is a jest, but it is not innocent. I have already known several cases, in which our young men, for the sake of mere mischief of that kind, have brought themselves into great difficulties." "But what shall I do?" I asked; "the letter is written, and they rely upon me to alter it." "Trust me," she replied, "and do not alter it; rather take it back, put it in your pocket, go away, and try to put matters straight through your friend. I will also put in a word; for look you, though I am a poor girl, and dependent upon these relations—who indeed do no harm, though they will often risk a good deal for the sake of fun or profit—I held out against them, and would not copy the first letter, as they requested. They wrote it in a feigned hand, and can do the same with this one, unless they

devise some other expedient. But you, a young man of good family, rich, independent, why will you allow yourself to be used as a tool in a business which can certainly bring you no good, and may possibly have most unpleasant consequences?" It was a pleasure to me to hear her speak at such length, for as a rule she took small part in the conversation. My feeling for her grew so strong, that, no longer master of myself, I replied, "I am not so independent as you suppose; and of what use is wealth to me, when I may not have the most precious thing I can desire?"

She drew the rough copy of my verses towards her, and read them in soft, low undertones. "That is very pretty," said she, stopping short at a sort of *naïve* conceit; "but it is a pity that it is not destined for any genuine purpose." "That would indeed be desirable," I cried, "and, oh! how happy would that man be who received such a proof of affection from a girl he tenderly loved." "It would not be likely to happen," she answered; "and yet many things are possible." "For example," I continued, "if any one who knew, prized, honored, and worshiped you, were to lay such a paper before you, and besought you very earnestly and tenderly, what would you do?" And I once more pushed towards her the paper she had just returned to me. She smiled, considered for a moment, took the pen, and signed her name. I was beside myself with rapture, sprang to my feet, and would have embraced her. "No kissing!" she said, "that is so vulgar; but let us love each other if we can." I had picked up the paper, and thrust it into my pocket. "No one shall ever get it," said I; "the affair is at an end. You have rescued me." "Now complete the rescue," she exclaimed, "and hurry off, before the others come, and you get into trouble and difficulty." I could not tear myself away from her, but she gently urged me, warmly pressing my right hand in both of hers! Tears stood in my eyes; I thought hers, too, were wet. I pressed my face upon her hands and hastened away. Never in my life had I been in such a tumult of emotion.

The first impulses of love, where youth is still pure and unspoiled, will be free from all taint of sensuality. Nature seems to intend that each sex should find in the other an

embodiment of the ideas of virtue and beauty. Thus the sight of this girl, and my love for her, had opened out to me a new world of loveliness and goodness. I read my poetic epistle a hundred times, gazed upon the signature, kissed it, pressed it to my heart, and rejoiced in its gracious avowal. But the more my transports increased, the more did it pain me, not to be able to visit her immediately, and to see and converse with her again; for I dreaded the reproofs and importunities of her cousins. Good Pylades, who might have acted as peacemaker, I could not contrive to meet. The next Sunday, therefore, I set out for Niederrad, where these associates generally met, and, as I expected, found them there. I was, however, greatly surprised, when, instead of behaving in a cross, distant manner, they greeted me with smiles and good humor. The youngest particularly was very friendly, took me by the hand, and said, "You played a sorry trick on us just now, and we were very angry with you; but when you left us and took the poetic epistle with you, we thought of a plan which otherwise might never have occurred to us. By way of atonement, you may treat us to-day, and you shall hear at the same time of our excellent idea: you will certainly be delighted with it." This address put me in no little perplexity; for I had about me money enough to pay scot for myself and a friend; but I was by no means prepared to stand treat for a whole company, especially one such as this, whose conviviality knew no bounds. Nay, the proposal astonished me the more, as they had always insisted, in the most honorable manner, that each one should pay only his own share. They smiled at my distress, and the youngest continued, "Let us first sit down, comfortably in the arbor, and then you shall learn more." We sat down, and he said, "When you had taken the love-letter with you, we talked the whole affair over once more, and came to the conclusion that out of mere love of mischief we had gratuitously abused your talent to the vexation of others and our own danger, when we could have employed it to the advantage of all of us. See, I have here an order both for a wedding-poem and for a dirge. The latter must be ready immediately, the former can wait a week. Now, if you will write these, which is an easy task for you, you will be treating us twice over, and we

shall long remain your debtors." The proposal pleased me in every respect; for from my childhood I had looked with a certain envy on those occasional poems, which then appeared in considerable numbers every week, indeed, in the case of fashionable weddings, by the dozen, because I thought I could do such things as well, if not better than others. Now an opportunity was offered me to distinguish myself, and especially to see myself in print. I showed no disinclination to comply. They acquainted me with personal details and other circumstances concerning the family; I withdrew to a little distance, made my rough sketch, and carried out one or two stanzas. However, when I rejoined the company, and made free use of the wine, the poem began to halt, and I was unable to hand it over to them that evening. "There is still time before to-morrow evening," they said; "besides, we must confess that the fee which we are to receive for the dirge is enough to pay for another merry night to-morrow. Come to us; for it is only fair that Gretchen should sup with us too, as it was really she who gave us the idea." My joy was unspeakable. On my way home I thought of nothing but the remaining stanzas, wrote down the whole before I went to sleep, and the next morning copied out the whole most neatly. The day seemed never-ending to me; and no sooner was it dusk, than I found myself again in the narrow little dwelling by my dear Gretchen's side.

Soon afterwards I made arrangements to celebrate a brilliant night right merrily; for I had agreed with Gretchen, and Pylades and his lady-love, that we should meet somewhere at nightfall. The city was already resplendent in every hole and corner when I met my beloved Gretchen. I offered her my arm; we strolled from one part to another, and were perfectly happy in each other's society.

Here we strolled pleasantly, four abreast, and I, by Gretchen's side, felt that I was wandering in those happy Elysian fields where from the trees they pluck crystal cups that immediately fill with the desired wine, and shake down fruits that change to the recipient's will. At last we too began to feel the need of such, and, led by Pylades, we found a very comfortable eating-house. We were all the better pleased to find we were the only guests, for everybody was out

and about the streets, and we passed the greater part of the night most happily and merrily in feelings of tender friendship and love. I escorted Gretchen as far as her door, and she kissed me on the forehead. It was the first and last time that she granted me this favor; for, alas, I was never to see her again.

The next morning, while I was yet in bed, my mother entered, anxious and troubled. It was easy to see when she was at all distressed. "Get up," she said, "and prepare for something unpleasant. It has come out that you frequent very bad company, and have got involved in very dangerous and disreputable affairs. Your father is beside himself, and we have only been able to obtain thus much from him, that he will have the matter looked into by a third party. Keep to your room, and wait for what will happen. Councilor Schneider will come to you; he is the man commissioned both by your father and by the authorities; for the matter is already in the lawyer's hands, and may take a very bad turn."

I saw that they thought the matter far worse than it was; yet felt not a little uneasy, even if they discovered nothing more than the actual state of things. My old *Messiah*-loving friend at last came in to me, tears standing in his eyes; he took me by the arm, and said, "I am heartily grieved to come to you on such an errand. I could never have imagined you could go so far astray. But what will not wicked companions and bad example do! Thus can a young and inexperienced man be led step by step to crime!" "I am conscious of no crime," I replied, "and just as little of having frequented bad company." "It is not now a question of self-defense," he interrupted me, "but of investigation, and on your part of upright confession." "What do you want to know?" I retorted. He sat down, drew out a paper, and began to question me: "Have you not recommended N. N. to your grandfather as a candidate for the post of **?" "Yes," I replied. "Where did you become acquainted with him?" "On my walks." "In what company?" I started: for I was unwilling to betray my friends. "Silence is useless now," he continued, "for quite enough is already known." "What is known then?" I asked. "That this man has been introduced to you by others like him—in fact, by ***."

Here he named three persons whom I had never seen nor known: and this I immediately explained. "You pretend," he resumed, "not to know these men, and yet have had frequent meetings with them." "Not at all," I replied; "for, as I have said, I do not know one of them, with the exception of the first, and even him I have never seen in a house." "Have you not often been in *** street?" "Never," I replied. This was not strictly true. I had once accompanied Pylades on a visit to his sweetheart, who lived in that street; but we had entered by the back-door, and remained in the summer-house. I therefore presumed that I might permit myself the subterfuge of stating that I had not been in the street itself.

The good man put more questions, all of which I could answer in the negative: for of all the points on which he wished for information I knew nothing. At last he said, in apparent vexation, "You repay my confidence and good-will very indifferently; I come to save you. You cannot deny that you have composed letters for these people themselves or for their accomplices, have supplied them with writings, and have thus been accessory to their evil acts; for it is a question of nothing less than forged papers, false wills, counterfeit bonds, and crimes of that nature. I come not only as a friend of the family, I come in the name and by order of the magistrates, who, in consideration of your connections and of your youth, would spare you and some other young men, who, like you, have been lured into the snare." It was strange to me that the names of the persons with whom I had been intimate did not occur among those he mentioned. The circumstances were not identical, though they had points in common; and I could still hope to save my young friends. But the good man grew more and more urgent. I could not deny that I had come home late many nights, that I had contrived to have a house-key made, that I had been seen at public places more than once with persons of low rank and suspicious appearance, that some girls were mixed up in the affair; in short, everything seemed to be discovered but the names. This gave me courage to persist steadfastly in my silence. "Do not send me from you," said my worthy friend, "the affair allows of no delay; I shall be

immediately followed by others, who will not grant you so much latitude. Do not make the matter, which is bad enough, worse by your obstinacy."

Now I called up vividly before my mind the picture of the cousins, and of Gretchen in particular: I saw them arrested, tried, punished, disgraced, and then it went through me like a flash of lightning, that the cousins, though they were always scrupulously honest with me, might have engaged in such bad ways, at least the oldest, whom I never cared for much, who used to come home the latest, and then could give but a poor account of himself. Still I kept back my confession. "For myself," I said, "I am conscious of no crime, and can feel perfectly at ease on that score; but it is not impossible that those with whom I have associated may have been guilty of some daring or illegal act. Let them be sought, found, convicted, punished; I have hitherto nothing to reproach myself with; and will not do any wrong to those who have behaved well and kindly by me." He did not let me finish, but exclaimed with some agitation, "Yes, they will be traced. These villains met in three houses. (He named the streets, he pointed out the houses, and, unfortunately, among them was the one which I was accustomed to frequent.) The first nest is already broken up, and by this time so are the two others. In a few hours the whole will be cleared up. Avoid, by a frank confession, a judicial inquiry, an appearance in court, and all other such unsavory proceedings." The house then was known and marked. It seemed useless to keep silence now; rather, by explaining the innocent character of our meetings, I could hope to be still more useful to them than to myself. "Sit down," I exclaimed, fetching him back from the door; "I will tell all, and remove a weight at once from your heart and mine; but I ask one thing; let there be no further doubt of my veracity."

I soon informed my friend of the whole course of affairs, and was, at first, calm and collected; but as I brought to mind and pictured to myself persons, objects, and events, and had to confess to so many innocent pleasures and charming enjoyments, as if before a criminal court, my feelings grew more and more painful, till at last I burst into tears and gave way to unrestrained emotion. Our family friend, who

hoped that now the real secret was coming to light (for he regarded my distress as a symptom that I was on the point of reluctantly confessing some monstrous crime), did his best to pacify me, for with him the discovery was the all-important matter; and at last succeeded so far, that I managed to stammer out my story to the ned. Though satisfied of the innocence of our meetings, he was still somewhat doubtful, and put further questions to me, which excited me afresh, so that I was beside myself with pain and anger. I asserted, finally, that I had nothing more to say, and was well assured I had nothing to fear, for I was innocent, of a good family and unblemished name; but that my friends might be just as guiltless, without their innocence being recognized, nor any favor shown them. I declared at the same time, that if they were not spared like myself, if their follies were not regarded with indulgence, and their faults pardoned, if anything in any way harsh or unjust befell them, no one should prevent me from avenging their injuries on my own person. Here, too, my friend tried to reassure me; but I did not trust him, and when at last he left me, I was in a deplorable condition. I now reproached myself for having revealed anything or thrown any light on the state of affairs. I foresaw that our childish actions, our youthful tastes and confidences, might be quite misinterpreted, and that I might perhaps have involved my worthy friend Pylades in the matter, and caused him much misery. These considerations pressed so overwhelmingly upon me, and so sharpened the edge of my distress, that I was half-maddened with grief. I threw myself full length upon the floor, and bedewed it with my tears.

I do not know how long I may have been lying there, when my sister entered, and, terrified at my violence, did all she could to raise me up. She told me that a person connected with the magistracy had waited below with my father for the return of our family friend, and that after they had been closeted together for some time, both the gentlemen had taken leave, talking to each other with apparent satisfaction, and even laughing aloud. She even thought she had heard the words—"It is all right; the affair is of no consequence." "Indeed!" I broke out, "the affair is of no consequence for me—for us; for I have committed no crime, and if I had, they

would somehow contrive to help me out of it: but the others, the others," I cried, "who will stand by them?"

My sister tried to comfort me by arguing circumstantially that if those of higher rank were to be saved, a veil must also be drawn over the faults of the more lowly. All this was of no avail. She had scarcely left me when I again abandoned myself to my grief, conjuring up alternately the image both of the objects of my passionate devotion and of their actual and possible misfortunes. I told myself story after story, saw nothing but a succession of mishaps, and did not fail in particular to imagine Gretchen and myself plunged in utter wretchedness.

Thus I passed both day and night in miserable restlessness, now raving, now utterly exhausted, so that I was glad at last to fall a prey to serious bodily illness, which compelled them to call in the help of a physician, and to think of every possible way of soothing me. This they thought they could best do by giving me in general terms the solemn assurance that all who were more or less involved in the guilt had been treated with the greatest forbearance, that my nearest friends, being all but innocent, had been dismissed with a slight reprimand, and that Gretchen had left the town and had returned to her own home. They hesitated most over this last point, and indeed it gave me little comfort; for I could see in it no voluntary departure, but only a shameful banishment. So that my bodily and mental condition by no means improved; my distress seemed rather as if it had but just begun, and I had time and opportunity enough to torment myself by weaving the wildest romance of sorrowful events, all leading to an inevitable and tragic catastrophe.

### SIXTH BOOK

Thus was I driven alternately to assist and to retard my recovery, and a certain secret annoyance was now added to my other feelings, or I saw plainly that I was watched—that they rarely handed me any sealed paper without observing what effect it produced—whether I kept it secret—whether I laid it down open, and so forth. I therefore conjectured that Pylades, or one of the cousins, or even Gretchen herself, might have attempted to write to me, either to give

or to obtain information. In addition to my sorrow, I was now for the first time thoroughly irritated, and had again fresh opportunities to indulge in suppositions and to delude myself by the wildest conjectures.

It was not long before they gave me a special custodian. Fortunately, it was a man whom I loved and valued. He had held the place of tutor in the family of one of our friends; but his former pupil had gone to the university. He often visited me in my sad condition, and they at last found it the most natural thing to give him a room next to mine, as it was to be his business to keep me occupied and quiet, and, as I could see, to keep his eye upon me. Still, as I esteemed him heartily, and had already confided many things to him, though not my affection for Gretchen, I determined all the more to be perfectly candid and straightforward with him, as it was intolerable to me to live in daily intercourse with any one, and at the same time to stand on a footing of uncertainty and constraint with him. It was not long, then, before I spoke to him on the matter, and refreshed myself by telling and retelling the minutest circumstances of my past happiness. The result of this was, that, like a sensible man, he saw it would be better to inform me of the upshot of the story, and that in every detail and particular, so that being once acquainted with the whole, I might be earnestly persuaded of the necessity of regaining my self-control, throwing the past behind me, and beginning a new life. First he confided to me who the other young people of position were who had allowed themselves to be enticed, first, into daring hoaxes, then into jesting offenses against the law, and further even to light-hearted acts of extortion, and other such dangerous exploits. Thus actually had arisen a little conspiracy, which unprincipled men had joined, who, by forging papers and counterfeiting signatures, had perpetrated many criminal acts, and had still worse crimes in contemplation. The cousins, after whom I at last impatiently inquired, had been found to be quite innocent, only very slightly acquainted with those others, and not at all implicated with them. My *protégé* was one of the worst, and indeed it was by recommending him to my grandfather that I had laid myself open to suspicion, for he had sued

for that office chiefly that he might have the means of undertaking or concealing certain villainies. After all this, I could at last contain myself no longer, and asked what had become of Gretchen, for whom I, once for all, confessed the strongest attachment. My friend shook his head and smiled. "Make yourself easy," he replied; "the girl has stood her trial well, and been handsomely acquitted. They could discover nothing in her but what was good and kind, the examiners themselves were well-disposed to her, and could not refuse her request that she might leave the city. Even what she confessed in respect to you, too, my friend, does her honor; I have read her deposition in the secret reports myself, and seen her signature." "The signature," exclaimed I, "which makes me so happy and so miserable! What has she confessed then? To what has she subscribed?" My friend hesitated before answering; but his cheerful look showed me that he concealed nothing dangerous. "If you must know, then," he replied at last, "when she was interrogated concerning you and her intercourse with you, she said quite frankly, 'I cannot deny that I have seen him often and with pleasure; but I have always treated him as a child, and my affection for him was truly that of a sister. In many cases I have given him good advice, and, far from instigating him to any doubtful actions, I have hindered him from taking part in wanton tricks, which might have brought him into trouble.'"

My friend still went on making Gretchen speak as a governess might; but I had already for some time ceased to listen to him; for I was terribly affronted that she had set me down in the reports as a child, and thought myself instantly cured of all passion for her. I even hastily assured my friend that all was now over. I spoke no more of her, her name never crossed my lips; but I could not leave off the bad habit of thinking about her, and of recalling her form, her manner, her demeanor, though now, in fact, it all appeared to me in quite another light. I felt it intolerable that a girl, at the most only a very few years older than I, should regard me as a child, while I imagined I passed for a very sensible and clever youth. Her cold and repelling manner, which had before so charmed me, now seemed quite

repugnant to me; the liberties which she had allowed herself to take with me, but had not permitted me to return, altogether odious. Yet all would have been well enough for me, if by signing that poetical love-letter, in which she had confessed a formal attachment to me, she had not given me a right to regard her as a sly and selfish coquette. I turned these irritating thoughts over and over in my mind, until I had entirely stripped her of all her amiable qualities. My judgment was convinced, and I thought I must cast her off; but her image!—her image gave me the lie whenever it hovered before me, and that was often enough.

Nevertheless, this barbed arrow was torn out of my heart, and the question then was, how best to assist the natural healing powers of youth. I did indeed resolve to play the man; and the first thing I instantly laid aside was the weeping and raving, which I now regarded as childish in the highest degree. A great step in the right direction! For I had often given myself up to such violent grief, half the night long, that at last my tears and sobs brought me to such a pass that I could scarce swallow any more, eating and drinking became painful to me, and my chest even began to be affected. The vexation which I constantly felt since the discovery made me banish every weakness. It seemed frightful to me that I had sacrificed sleep, repose and health, for the sake of a girl who was pleased to consider me a babe, and to imagine herself, with respect to me, something very much like a nurse.

These depressing reflections, I was soon convinced, were only to be banished by activity; but on what should I set to work? I had, indeed, much lost ground to regain in many things, and to prepare myself, in more than one sense, for the university, which I was about to attend; but I found neither pleasure nor success in any occupation. Much appeared to me familiar and trivial; I found neither sufficient determination in myself nor external opportunity for extending my studies in several possible directions.

The weather had improved; and we often went out together, and visited the pleasure resorts which surrounded the city in great numbers. But it was precisely in such places that I was most ill at ease; for I still saw the ghosts of the

cousins everywhere, and feared, at any moment, to see one of them step forward.

From such rambling excursions, undertaken partly for pleasure, partly for art's sake, and which could be taken in a short time and often repeated, I was again drawn home, and that by a magnet which always acted upon me strongly: this was my sister. Only a year younger than I, she had lived my whole life with me as far back as I could remember, and was thus bound to me by the closest ties. To these natural causes was added a forcible motive, springing from the conditions of our family life. There was on the one hand a father, certainly affectionate and well-meaning, but grave, hiding, with incredible persistence, the impulses of a naturally affectionate heart under an iron sternness of demeanor, that he might attain his end of giving his children the best education, and of building up, regulating, and maintaining his prosperous household; on the other hand, a mother, as yet almost a child, who first grew up to womanhood with and in her two eldest children; these three, looking out on the world with healthy eyes, eager for life, and desiring present enjoyment. This contradiction, ever present in the family, increased with years. My father followed out his views unmoved and undeterred; the mother and children could not give up their feelings, their claims, their desires.

Under these circumstances it was natural that brother and sister should be closely drawn to one another, and cling to their mother, that they might snatch singly the pleasures forbidden as a whole. But since the hours of solitude and toil were very long compared to the moments of recreation and enjoyment, especially for my sister, who could never leave the house for so long a time as I could, the necessity she felt for intercourse with me was further sharpened by the longing with which she accompanied me in my wanderings.

And as, in our early years, lessons and play, growth and education, had been shared in common, so that we might well have been taken for twins, in the same way this community of thought, this confidence, persisted during the development of our physical and moral powers. That interest of youth, that amazement at the awakening of sensual im-

pulses which clothe themselves in processes of mind, of cravings of the mind assuming sensual images, all our broodings upon these themes, which obscure rather than enlighten us, as the fog covers rather than illumines the vale from which it is about to rise, the many errors and aberrations springing therefrom,—all these the brother and sister shared and endured hand in hand. Yet the nearer they wished to approach each other, to draw from one another light upon their strange condition, the more forcibly did the sacred awe of their close relationship keep them apart.

It is with reluctance that I set forth in vague terms what I attempted to express years ago and failed. The early loss of this dear and inscrutable being was sufficient inducement to make me attempt to form some idea of her whole worth, and thus arose in me the conception of a poetic whole, in which it might be possible to unfold her personality: but no other form presented itself than that of the Richardsonian novel. Only by minutest detail, by endless detached instances which all vividly bear the character of the whole, and as they spring from a wonderful depth give some clew to that depth;—only in such a manner would it have been in some degree possible to give an idea of this remarkable personality; for the spring can be apprehended only while it is flowing. The stress of the world drew me back from this fair, profitable purpose, as from so many others, and nothing now remains for me but to conjure up for a moment that blessed spirit, as by the aid of a magic mirror.

She was tall, finely and delicately formed, with a natural dignity of manner, which melted easily into a sweet graciousness. Her features, neither striking nor beautiful, indicated a character which was not and could not be in unity with itself. Her eyes were not the finest I have ever seen, but the deepest, with most hidden depths, and with an unrivaled power of expressing love and affection. And yet, properly speaking, their expression was not tender, like that which comes from the heart, and at the same time brings with it something of longing and desire; it came rather from the soul, full and rich, eager, apparently, only to give, not anxious to receive.

But what peculiarly disfigured her face, so that she would

often appear positively ugly, was the fashion of those times, which not only bared the forehead, but, either accidentally or on purpose, did everything apparently or really to enlarge it. Now, as she had the most feminine, most well-rounded forehead, and moreover thick black eyebrows, and prominent eyes, these formed a contrast, which, if it did not repel every stranger at the first glance, at least did not attract him. She early felt it, and this feeling became constantly more painful to her as she approached those years when both sexes find an innocent pleasure in being mutually attractive.

Nobody can find his own appearance repugnant; the ugliest as well as the most beautiful has a right to enjoy his own presence; and as liking beautifies, and every one regards his own reflection in the looking-glass with liking, it may be asserted that every one must see his own face with complacency, even if he may wish to struggle against the feeling. Yet my sister had such a firm good sense, that she could not possibly be blind and foolish in this repect; on the contrary, she perhaps knew more clearly than she ought, that she came far behind her girl friends in external beauty, without feeling consoled by the fact that she infinitely surpassed them in inner qualities.

If a girl can ever be recompensed for the want of beauty, she could have found rich compensation in the unbounded confidence, regard, and love which all her friends bore her, whether older or younger than herself. A very pleasant circle had gathered round her; even some young men had succeeded in gaining admission; nearly every girl found an admirer; she alone remained unmated. Indeed, if her exterior was in some measure repulsive, the mind that pierced through it was also rather repelling than attractive; for the presence of excellence makes others reflect upon themselves. She felt this keenly, and did not conceal it from me, but her love for me grew all the stronger. The case was singular enough. As confidants to whom one reveals a love-affair by their genuine sympathy become lovers also, nay, grow into rivals, and at last, perchance, attract the passion to themselves, so it was with us two: for, when my connection with Gretchen was broken off, my sister consoled me the more warmly, because she secretly felt the satisfaction of having

got rid of a rival; and I, too, could not but feel a quiet, half-malicious pleasure, when she did me the justice to assure me that I was the only one who truly loved, understood, and esteemed her. If now, from time to time, my grief for the loss of Gretchen revived, and I suddenly began to weep, to lament, and to lose my self-control, my despair over my loss awakened in her too a similar desperate impatience at her failure to gain, or prosper in, or keep, the joy of such youthful attachments; we then both thought ourselves infinitely unhappy, the more so as, in this singular case, the confidants could not change into lovers.

Michaelmas, the time when I was to go to the university, was drawing near, and my mind was quite as much excited about the life there as about its learning. I grew more and more clearly conscious of an aversion to my native city. The loss of Gretchen had snapped the main stem of the boyish, youthful plant; it needed time to put out fresh side-shoots, and to recover from the original injury by new growth. My ramblings through the streets had ceased; I now, like others, only went where necessity impelled. I never went again into Gretchen's quarter of the city, nor even into its vicinity; and just as its old walls and towers became gradually offensive to me, I began too to dislike the constitution of the city; all that had hitherto seemed so estimable now appeared distorted in my eyes. As grandson of the *Schultheiss,* I had been well aware of the hidden defects of such a republic, and that all the more because of that peculiar surprise and busy curiosity to which children are excited, as soon as something which they have hitherto implicitly revered becomes in any degree suspicious to them. The fruitless indignation of upright men, struggling against such as are to be influenced and even bribed by factions, had become but too plain to me; I had a boundless hatred of injustice; for all children are moral rigorists. My father, who was concerned in the affairs of the town merely as a private citizen, expressed himself with very lively indignation about many abortive efforts. And after so much study and pains, so many travels and endeavors, after such wide and varied culture, did I not see him leading within four walls a solitary life, such as I could never desire for myself? All this weighed on my

mind as a horrible burden, from which I could only free myself by trying to contrive a plan of life altogether different from that which had been marked out for me. In imagination I cast aside my legal studies and devoted myself solely to languages, to antiquarian research, to history, and to interests connected with them.

Indeed, at all times, the reproduction in poetic form of what I had perceived in myself, in others, and in nature, afforded me the greatest pleasure. I did it with ever-increasing facility, because it came by instinct, and no criticism had led me astray; and if I did not feel full of confidence in my productions, I could certainly regard them as defective, but not such as to be utterly rejected. In spite of adverse criticism on individual points, I still retained in private my conviction that I could not but gradually improve, and that some time my name might be honorably mentioned along with Hagedorn, Gellert, and other such men. Yet I could not feel that so empty and inadequate a distinction could satisfy me. I wished to devote myself professionally and with zeal to those aforesaid fundamental studies, and, even while making more rapid progress in my own work by a more thorough insight into antiquity, to qualify myself for a university professorship, which seemed to me the most desirable position for a young man who intended to educate himself and to contribute to the education of others.

With these intentions, I always had my eye upon Göttingen. My whole confidence was placed in men like Heyne, Michaelis, and so many others; my most ardent wish was to sit at their feet and listen to their teaching. But my father remained inflexible. Though some family friends, who were of my opinion, tried their best to influence him, he persisted that I must go to Leipzig. I was now resolved, in self-defense, contrary to his views and wishes, to choose a line of studies and of life for myself. My father's obstinacy in unconsciously opposing my plans strengthened me in my rebellion, so that I made no scruple of listening to him by the hour, while he repeatedly described to me the course of life and study which I was to pursue at the universities and in the world at large.

Since all hopes of Göttingen were cut off, I now turned

my attention to Leipzig. There Ernesti seemed a star to me, and Morus, too, awakened my confidence. I planned in secret a rival career, or rather I built a castle in the air, on tolerably solid foundations, thinking it quite dignified and romantic to mark out for myself a path in life, which seemed all the less visionary, as Griesbach had already made great progress in a similar direction, and was commended for it by every one. The secret joy of a prisoner, when he has loosed his fetters and rapidly filed through the bars of his gaol-window, cannot be greater than mine was as day after day slipped by and October drew near. The inclement season and the bad roads, a universal topic of complaint, did not frighten me. The idea of making a beginning in a strange place, and in winter, did not daunt me; suffice it to say, that I only saw my present situation was a depressing one, and imagined the rest of the unknown world as bright and cheerful. So I dreamed my dreams, and grew absorbed in them, promising myself nothing but happiness and satisfaction in the distant future.

Closely as I kept these projects a secret from every one else, I could not hide them from my sister, who, though very much alarmed about them at first, was finally consoled by my promise to send for her, so that she might enjoy with me the brilliant station I was to win, and share my comfort with me.

Michaelmas, so longingly expected, came at last, and I set out joyfully, in the company of the bookseller Fleischer and his wife, whose maiden name was Triller, and who was going to visit her father in Wittemberg; leaving the noble city in which I had been born and bred, with utter indifference, as if I wished never to set foot in it again.

Thus, at certain epochs, children part from parents, servants from masters, *protégés* from their patrons; and whether it succeed or not, such an attempt to stand on one's own feet, to make oneself independent, to live for oneself, is always in accordance with the law of nature.

I arrived in Leipzig just at the time of the fair, which particularly delighted me: for it revived memories of my native city by the sight of familiar wares and traders, only exhibited in other places, and differently arranged. I rambled about

the market and the booths with much interest, but my attention was particularly attracted by the inhabitants of the East in their strange dresses, Poles and Russians, and above all, Greeks, whose handsome forms and dignified costume brought me back repeatedly to examine them.

But this animated bustle was soon over, and now the city itself drew my attention, with its fine, lofty, regular buildings. It impressed me very favorably, and I must admit, that in general, but especially in the quiet hours of Sundays and holidays, it presents a striking appearance; and the lights and shadows of its moonlit streets often invited me to nocturnal rambles.

In the meantime, compared with those to which I had hitherto been accustomed, my new surroundings were by no means satisfactory. Leipzig calls up in the observer no memories of bygone times; its monuments speak of a new and recent epoch; a period of commercial activity, ease, and wealth. Yet I appreciated those huge buildings, fronting two streets at once, whose vast court-yards embrace a world of citizen life within their towering walls, and which are like great castles, or even whole quarters of towns. It was in one of these strange dwellings that I took up my quarters, in the *Feuerkugel* (Bombshell Tavern), between the Old and the New *Neumarkt*. A couple of pleasant rooms looking out upon a court-yard, which, being a thoroughfare, was fairly animated, had been taken by the bookseller Fleischer during the fair; and I was able to rent them for the rest of the time at a moderate price. My fellow-lodger was a theological student, well versed in his professional studies, well-meaning, but poor, and suffering from a weakness of the eyes, which caused him great anxiety for the future. He had brought this trouble upon himself by his inordinate reading till dusk advanced, and even by moonlight, to save a little oil. Our old hostess showed herself kind to him, always friendly to me, and attentive to both of us.

At first I attended my lectures zealously and assiduously: but philosophy failed to enlighten me at all. In logic it seemed strange to me that I should have so to pick to pieces, isolate, and, as it were, destroy those operations of the mind which I had performed with the greatest ease from my youth

upwards, and this in order to understand the right use of them. Of the object of the world, and of God, I thought I knew about as much as the professor himself, and again and again he seemed to be confronted with most inextricable difficulties. Yet all went on tolerably well till towards Shrovetide, when, in the neighborhood of Professor Winckler's house in St. Thomas' Churchyard, the most delicious fritters came hot out of the pan just at the hour of lecture, and these delayed us so long, that our note-books grew meager, and the conclusion of them, towards spring, melted away with the snow, and was lost.

Matters soon went as badly with the law lectures: for I already knew just as much as the professor thought good to communicate to us. My persistent industry in writing down the lectures at first was paralyzed by degrees, for I found it excessively tedious to note down once more what I had repeated, either by question or answer, so often with my father as to retain it for ever in my memory. The harm which is done when young people at school are carried on too far in many branches of study, was shown still more clearly at a later date, when time and attention were diverted from linguistic exercises and essentially preparatory studies, in order to devote them to so-called practical subjects, which dissipate more than they cultivate the faculties, unless they are methodically and thoroughly taught.

I here mention, in passing, another evil by which students are much hindered. Professors, as well as other men in office, cannot all be of the same age; but as the younger ones, as a matter of fact, only teach in order to learn, and, if they have talent, in order to be in advance of their time, they acquire their own education entirely at the expense of their hearers, since these are not taught what they really need, but that which the professor wishes to work out for his own needs. Among the oldest professors, on the contrary, many have long been at a standstill; they expound on the whole only fixed views, and, in single instances, much that time has already condemned as false and useless. Between the two a sad conflict arises, in which young minds are torn hither and thither, and which can scarcely be corrected by the middle-aged professors, who, though sufficiently well-informed and cultivated,

always feel within themselves an active striving after further thought and knowledge.

Now as in this way I learned much more than I could digest, which was the cause in me of an ever-increasing discomfort, so also my life laid upon me many trifling disagreeables, such as every one must endure who comes into new surroundings and relationships.

If elderly persons wish to act the pedagogue efficiently, they should neither prohibit nor render distasteful to a youth any of his pleasures, whatever they may be, unless, at the same time, they have something else to put in their place, or can contrive some distraction. Everybody protested against my tastes and inclinations; and, on the other hand, what they commended to me, either stood so far removed from me that I could not discern its excellencies, or so near me that I thought it no whit better than the objects of their censure. Utterly perplexed, I hoped great things from a lecture of Ernesti's on Cicero's *De Oratore*. Something, indeed, I learned from this lecture, but it threw no light on the subject which particularly concerned me. What I wanted was a standard by which to judge, and this seemed nowhere to be found, for no two thought alike, even when they brought forward examples; and where were we to find a basis of criticism when such fault could be found with a man like Wieland, whose delightful writing was so captivating to our youthful minds?

During this period of conflicting and destructive influences in my life and studies, it happened that I dined daily at Hofrat Ludwig's. He was a physician and a botanist, and the society that frequented his table, with the exception of Morus, consisted of medical men, either just beginning or approaching the close of their academic course. Hence during these hours the conversation I heard turned exclusively on medicine or natural history, and my imagination was thus drawn into a perfectly new field. I heard the names of Haller, Linnæus, Buffon, mentioned with great respect; and even if disputes often arose about mistakes which they were said to have made, yet in the end all differences were forgotten out of deference to their acknowledged greatness. The subjects discussed were of such interest

and weight as to enthrall my attention. By degrees I grew familiar with many names and copious terms, which I absorbed all the more readily as I was afraid to write down a rhyme, however spontaneously conceived, or to read a poem, for fear that, though pleased with it for the moment, I might very soon be forced, as in so many other cases, to condemn it.

This uncertainty in matters of taste and judgment disturbed me more and more every day, and at last drove me to despair. I had brought with me those early productions of mine which I thought the best, partly because I hoped to win credit by them, partly that I might be able to test my progress with greater certainty; but I found myself in the miserable situation of one who is required to completely change his way of thinking and to renounce all that he has hitherto loved and appreciated. However, after some time, and many struggles, I was filled with such contempt for all my efforts, complete and incomplete, that one day I made a bonfire of all poetry, prose, plans, sketches, and projects on the kitchen hearth, and gave our good old landlady considerable fright and anxiety by the smoke which pervaded the whole house.

## SEVENTH BOOK

With conscientious industry I had worked my way through the period of prolixity in which my youth had fallen, in company with many worthy men. The numerous quarto volumes of manuscript which I left behind with my father might serve as sufficient witness; and what a mass of attempts, rough drafts, and half-executed designs, had, more from despondency than conviction, ended in smoke! Now, through conversation in general, through instruction, through so many conflicting opinions, but especially through my fellow-boarder, Hofrat Pfeil, I learned to value more and more the importance of the subject-matter, and the conciseness of the treatment; without, however, being able to make clear to myself where the former was to be sought, or how the latter was to be attained. For, what with the limitations of my life, what with the indifference of my companions, the reserve of the professors, the exclusiveness of the educated inhabitants, and what with the complete insignificance of external nature, it was vain to look

for any inspiration from without. If, therefore, I desired a true basis in feeling or reflection for my poems, I was forced to seek it in my own heart; if I required for my poetic representation a first-hand impression of an object or an event, I must necessarily remain within the circle from which an appeal to my feelings, an awakening of my interest, was likely to come. With these convictions I first wrote certain little poems, in the form of songs or in a less regular measure; they are founded on reflection, treat of the past, and for the most part take an epigrammatic turn.

And thus began that habit from which I could not break away my whole life through—the habit of turning into an image, into a poem, whatever delighted or troubled, or otherwise occupied me, and thus of coming to some definite conclusion with regard to it, so that I might both rectify my conceptions of external things and satisfy my inner cravings. To no one was the faculty for so doing more necessary than to me, for by nature I was constantly carried from one extreme to the other. Whatever, therefore, of mine has become public, are but fragments of a great confession, and this little book is a bold attempt to render it complete. . . .

### EIGHTH BOOK

While I was feeling a boundless grief at the death of Winckelmann,[1] it did not occur to me that I should soon be in a state of apprehension for my own life: for, during all these events, my bodily condition had not taken the most favorable turn. I had brought with me from home a certain tendency to hypochondria, which, in this new sedentary and lounging life, was strengthened rather than diminished. The pain in my breast, which I had felt from time to time ever since the accident at Auerstädt, and which had perceptibly increased after a fall from horseback, made me dejected. By an unfortunate diet I destroyed my powers of digestion; the heavy Merseburg beer clouded my brain; the coffee, which produced a peculiar depression, especially when taken with milk after dinner, paralyzed my bowels, and seemed completely to suspend their functions, so that I experienced great uneasiness on this account, without having sufficient resolution to adopt

[1] Winckelmann was assassinated.

a more rational mode of life. My spirits, sustained by ample youthful strength, fluctuated between the extremes of unrestrained gayety and melancholy discomfort. Besides this, the epoch of the cold water bath, enjoined on all unconditionally, had just begun. One was told to sleep on a hard bed, only lightly covered, and by this means all the usual perspiration was suppressed. These and other follies, in consequence of some misunderstood suggestions of Rousseau, would, it was promised, bring us nearer to nature, and deliver us from the corruption of morals. Now, all these practices, adopted without discrimination, and with foolish inconsistency, were found by many to have the most injurious consequences, and I goaded what had been in the first instance a sound constitution to such a degree, that the particular organs contained in it were at last forced to break out into conspiracy and revolution, in order to save the whole.

One night I awoke with a violent hemorrhage, and had just strength and presence of mind enough to waken my neighbor in the next room. Dr. Reichel was called in, who assisted me in the kindest manner; and for many days I hovered betwixt life and death; and even the joy of subsequent improvement was embittered by the circumstance that, during the hemorrhage, a swelling had formed on the left side of the neck, which they only found time to notice after the danger was past. Recovery is, however, always pleasant and delightful, even though progress is slow and painful; and since nature had asserted herself in me, I seemed to have become another man: for I had gained a greater cheerfulness of mind than I had known for a long time, and I was rejoiced to feel my inner self set free, although externally a lengthy illness threatened me.

But what particularly revived me at this time was to see how many eminent men had, undeservedly, given me their affection. Undeservedly, I say; for there was not one among them whom I had not troubled by my tiresome vagaries, not one whom I had not more than once wounded by a morbid spirit of contradiction, and whom I had not stubbornly avoided for a time, from a consciousness of my own misbehavior. All this was forgotten; they treated me in the most affectionate manner, and sought to amuse and divert me,

either in my chamber or elsewhere, as soon as I could leave it. They drove out with me, entertained me at their country-houses, and I seemed to recover rapidly.

I left Leipzig in the September of 1768, in a comfortable hired coach, and in the company of some dependable persons of my acquaintance.

The nearer I approached my native city, the more I recalled with misgiving the circumstances, prospects, and hopes with which I had left home, and it was very depressing to feel that I was now returning like a shipwrecked mariner. Yet since I had nothing very much to reproach myself with, I became tolerably composed; however, the welcome was not without emotion. The great vivacity of my nature, stimulated and heightened by sickness, caused an impassioned scene. Perhaps I looked worse than I myself knew, as for a long time I had not consulted a looking-glass; and who does not become used to himself? At any rate, it was silently agreed that various communications should not be made all at once, and before all things I was to have both bodily and mental repose.

My sister at once became my companion, and, as from her letters previously, I could now learn from her lips the circumstances and state of the family, but with greater detail and accuracy. My father had, after my departure, concentrated his pedagogic mania upon my sister, and in a house the doors of which were closed to society, rendered secure by peace, and even cleared of lodgers, he had cut her off from almost all intercourse with or recreation in the outer world. She had by turns to work at French, Italian, and English, besides which he compelled her to practice a great part of the day on the harpsichord. Her writing also could not be neglected, and I had already noticed that he directed her correspondence with me, and had transmitted his teachings to me through her pen. My sister was, and remained, a being who defied analysis, the most singular mixture of sternness and gentleness, of stubbornness and complaisance, and these qualities asserted themselves, sometimes simultaneously, sometimes independently, at the dictates of will or affection. Thus she had, in a manner terrible to me, turned the hard side of her character towards her father, whom she

could not forgive for having prevented or spoiled for her so many innocent joys during these three years, and she refused to recognize a single one of his good and excellent qualities. She did all that he commanded or prescribed, but in the most unamiable manner in the world. She did it according to the usual routine, but not a bit more and not a bit less. She never made any concession from love or a desire to please, so that this was one of the first things of which my mother complained in a private conversation with me. But since love was as essential to my sister as to any human being, she expended all her affection upon me. Her care in nursing and entertaining me absorbed all her time; her companions, who were dominated by her without her knowing it, had likewise to devise various amusements and consolations for me. She invented many ways of cheering me, and even developed germs of comical humor which I had never known in her, and which became her very well. We soon invented a secret language of our own, which enabled us to converse before anybody without their understanding us, and she often used this gibberish with great pertness in the presence of our parents.

My father, for his part, led a life of tolerable comfort. He was in good health, spent a great part of the day in the instruction of my sister, continued to write the description of his travels, and spent more time in tuning his lute than in playing on it. At the same time he concealed, as well as he could, his vexation at finding in the place of a robust, active son, prepared to take his degree and follow the career marked out for him, an invalid who seemed to suffer more in mind than in body. He made no secret of his wish that my cure should be hurried on as much as possible; and, in particular, I had to be on my guard against hypochrondriacal expressions in his presence, because they were apt to make him passionate and bitter.

My mother, by nature very lively and cheerful, led a very tedious life under these circumstances. Her small amount of housekeeping was soon done. The mind of the good lady, never unoccupied, craved some interest, and the subject closest at hand was religion, which she welcomed the more warmly as her best friends were cultivated and ardent worshipers of

God. At the head of these stood Fräulein von Klettenberg. She is the same person whose conversations and letters were the source of the "Confessions of a Beautiful Soul," inserted in "Wilhelm Meister." She was delicately formed, of medium height; an attractive, unaffected manner had been rendered yet more pleasing by a knowledge of the forms of social and court life. Her very neat attire reminded one of the dress of the Moravians. Her serenity and peace of mind never deserted her. She looked upon her sickness as a necessary part of her transient earthly existence; she suffered with the greatest patience, and, in painless intervals, was animated and talkative. Her favorite, nay, indeed, perhaps her only topic, was the spiritual experiences which a thoughtful woman may trace in her own inner life; with these were connected religious feelings, which she discussed in a very graceful manner, nay, with genius, as either natural or supernatural. It scarcely needs more to remind those interested in such descriptions of that detailed delineation which had its origin in the very depths of her soul. Owing to the very peculiar course she had followed from her youth upwards, the distinguished rank in which she had been born and educated, and the vigor and originality of her mind, she was not in complete harmony with the other ladies who had entered upon the same path to salvation. Frau Griesbach, the chief of them, seemed too severe, too dry, too learned; she knew, thought, went further than the others, who had enough to do with the development of their feelings, and she was therefore a trial to them, because not every one either could or would carry with her so extensive an equipment on the road to bliss. But for this reason there was a certain monotony about most of them, seeing that they exclusively used a peculiar terminology which might be compared to that of the later sentimentalists. Fräulein von Klettenberg steered her course between both extremes, and appeared to trace with some complacency a counterpart to herself in the figure of Count Zinzendorf, whose opinions and actions bore witness to high birth and distinguished rank. She now found in me what she needed, a spirited youth, striving after an unknown happiness, who, although not conscious of extraordinary sin, yet was not at his ease, and did not enjoy perfect health

either of body or soul. She took pleasure in what nature had given me, as well as in much that I had acquired. And if she admitted my superiority in many ways, this was by no means humiliating to her: for, in the first place, she never thought of measuring herself with one of the opposite sex, and secondly, she believed that in regard to religious culture she was very much in advance of me. She interpreted in her own way my disquiet, my impatience, my striving, my seeking and inquiry, my musing and wavering, and did not conceal from me her conviction, but assured me in plain terms, that all this proceeded from my having no reconciled God. Now I had believed from my youth upwards that I stood on very good terms with my God, nay, I even fancied to myself, in view of various experiences, that He might even be in arrears in His account with me; and I was daring enough to think that I had something to forgive Him. This presumption was based on my infinite good intentions, which, it seemed to me, He should have assisted more actively. It may be imagined how often I and my friend fell into dispute on this subject, which, however, always terminated with absolute cordiality, and often, like my conversations with the old rector, with the remark, that I was a foolish fellow, and many allowances must be made for me.

The account of whatever moved, existed, and occupied me at this time, is already full enough; but I must nevertheless revert once again to the interest aroused in me by supersensuous things, of which I set about forming some conception, if it were possible, once for all.

In this attempt I was greatly influenced by an important work that fell into my hands; it was Arnold's *History of the Church and Heretics.* This man is not merely a reflective historian, but at the same time devout and sympathetic. His opinions accorded well with mine, and what particularly delighted me in his work was, that I acquired a more favorable idea of many heretics who had hitherto been represented to me as mad or impious. The spirit of contradiction and the love of paradoxes is inherent in all of us. I studied the different opinions with diligence, and as I had often heard it said that in the end every man has a religion of his own, nothing seemed more natural to me than that I should fashion

one for myself, and this I did with much satisfaction. Neo-Platonism formed the basis; the hermetical, the mystical, the cabalistic, also contributed their share, and thus I constructed a world for myself that looked strange enough.

I did not find it difficult to represent to myself a Godhead which has gone on producing itself from all eternity; but as production cannot be conceived without multiplicity, so it must of necessity have at once recognized itself as a Second, which we acknowledge under the name of the Son; now these two must have continued the act of production, and again mirrored themselves in a Third, which was just as substantial, living, and eternal as the Whole. With these, however, the circle of the Godhead was complete, and it would not have been possible for them to produce another perfectly equal to them. But since the impulse to production still persisted, they created a fourth existence, which at the outset contained within itself a contradiction, inasmuch as it was, like them, unlimited, and yet at the same time was to be contained in them and bounded by them. This was Lucifer, to whom the whole power of creation was committed from this time, and from whom all other beings were to proceed. He immediately displayed his infinite activity by creating all the host of angels; all, again, after his own likeness, unlimited, but contained in him and bounded by him. Surrounded by such glory, he forgot his higher origin, and believed that he was self-sufficient, and from this first ingratitude sprang all that does not seem to us in accordance with the will and purposes of the Godhead. Now the more he centered his energies upon himself, the more miserable must he have become, as must also all the spirits whose elevation to their holy origin he had frustrated. And so that came to pass which is typified to us by the Fall of the Angels. One part of them combined with Lucifer, the other turned again to its origin. In this combination of the whole creation, which had proceeded out of Lucifer, and was forced to follow him, originated all that we perceive under the form of matter, which we figure to ourselves as heavy, solid, and dark, but which, since it is descended, if not immediately, yet by filiation, from the Divine Being, is just as unlimited, powerful, and eternal as its sire and his sires. Since then the whole mischief, if we may call

it so, arose solely through the one-sided tendency of Lucifer, this creation lacked its nobler half; for it possessed all that is gained by concentration, while it was wanting in all that can only be effected by expansion; and so the whole creation might have destroyed itself by persistent concentration, have annihilated itself with its father Lucifer, and have lost all its claims to an equal eternity with the Godhead. This condition the Elohim contemplated for a time, and they had the choice, either of waiting for those æons, in which the field would again have become clear, and space would be left them for a new creation, or of intervening in the existing state of things, and supplying the want in accordance with their own infinity. They chose the latter course, and by their mere will supplied in an instant the whole deficiency entailed by Lucifer's undertaking. They gave to infinite existence the faculty of expanding, of turning towards them; the true pulse of life was again restored, and Lucifer himself could not evade the effects of their intervention. This is the epoch when what we know as light appeared, and when what we are accustomed to designate by the word creation began. Greatly as this creation multiplied by progressive degrees, through the continuous vital power of the Elohim, nevertheless, a being able to restore the original connection with the Godhead was still wanting; and so man was created, who was to be similar, yea, equal to the Godhead in all things; but thereby, in effect, found himself once more in the position of Lucifer, in being at the same time absolute and limited; and, since this contradiction was to manifest itself in him through all the categories of existence, and a perfect consciousness, as well as a decisive will, was to be an attribute of his state, it was to be foreseen that he must be at the same time the most perfect and the most imperfect, the most happy and the most unhappy creature. It was not long before he, too, played the part of Lucifer. Separation from the benefactor is ingratitude in essence, and thus a second act of defection was perpetrated, although the whole creation is, and was, nothing but a falling away from and returning to its source.

It is easy to see how in this scheme of things the Redemption was not only decreed from eternity, but was regarded as eternally necessary, nay, as requiring constant renewal

throughout the whole period of creation and existence. Hence nothing is more natural than for the Deity himself to take the form of man, which had already been prepared as a vestment, and to share his fate for a short time, in order, by thus assuming his likeness, to enhance his joys and alleviate his sorrows. The history of all religions and philosophies teaches us that this great truth, indispensable for man, has been handed down by different nations, in different times, in various ways, even in strange fables and images, in accordance with their limitations. Suffice it to acknowledge that we find ourselves in a condition which, even if it seems to drag us down and oppress us, yet gives us the opportunity, nay, makes it our duty, to raise ourselves, and to fulfill the purposes of the Godhead, by not omitting regular acts of self-renunciation alternating with the antithetical acts of necessary self-affirmation.

### NINTH BOOK

I RECONCILED myself to my father's intention of sending me to Strasburg, where I was promised a merry, cheerful life, and where I could prosecute my studies, and at last take my degree.

By the spring I felt restored to health, and still more to youthful spirits, and once more longed to be out of my father's house, this second time, however, for very different reasons. I had come to hate the charming rooms and pleasant scenes where I had suffered so much, and it was impossible to establish any friendly relations with my father. I could not quite forgive him for having shown an unjustifiable impatience at my relapses and at my tedious recovery; for speaking with cruelty instead of comfort and forbearance, about that which lay in no man's hand, as if it were a mere matter of will-power. And he, too, felt hurt and offended by me in various ways.

For young people return from the university with many general theories, which, indeed, is quite right and suitable; but full of confidence in their own wisdom, they apply them as a standard to the events that occur, and these must often of necessity suffer in the test. I had, for example, gained a general notion of architecture, and of the arrangement and

decoration of houses, and imprudently, in conversation, had applied this knowledge to our own house. My father had designed the whole arrangement of it, and superintended the building of it with persevering zeal, and considering that it was to be merely a residence for himself and his family, no objection could be made to it; besides, very many of the houses in Frankfort were built on the same plan. An open staircase ran up through the house, and on it opened several large ante-rooms, which might very well have been rooms in themselves, and, as a matter of fact, we always used them in the warm weather. But this way of living, pleasant and cheerful enough for a single family—this free communication from the top to the bottom of the house—became of the greatest inconvenience as soon as different parties occupied the house, as we had experienced but too well when the French were quartered on us. For that painful scene with the king's lieutenant would not have happened, my father would even have been spared many such annoyances, if, after the Leipzig fashion, our staircase had run to one side of the house, and each story had had its separate door. This style of building I once highly commended for its advantages, and showed my father the possibility of altering his staircase too; whereupon he fell into an incredible passion, all the more violent because I had just before found fault with some scrolled looking-glass frames, and condemned certain Chinese hangings. A scene ensued, which, though hushed up for the time being, hastened my journey to Alsace. My journey to this lovely district was quickly and comfortably carried out, thanks to the new and convenient institution of diligences.

I alighted at the Inn *Zum Geist* (of the Holy Ghost), and then my eager desires prompted me to hurry to the minster, which my fellow-travelers had pointed out to me some time before, and which had long been visible. When I caught my first glimpse of this colossus through the narrow streets, and then found myself too close to it in the confined limits of the little square, it made upon me an absolutely unique impression.

I could not analyze it at the moment, but bore it dimly with me as I hurried up the cathedral tower in order not to miss the opportunity, while the sun was still high and bright

in the heavens, of at once enjoying the magnificent view of the rich, wide-spreading country.

And now, from the summit, I saw before me the beautiful country which was to be my home for some time: the noble city, the wide meadows around it, thickly set with spreading trees, that striking richness of vegetation which follows the windings of the Rhine, and marks its banks and its islands, large and small. Nor is the lowland, stretching from the south, and watered by the Iller, less rich in varied green and picturesqueness.

Even westward, towards the mountains, there is much low-lying ground, which affords quite as charming a view of wood and meadow-growth, whilst the northern and more hilly part is intersected by innumerable little brooks, which induce a rapid vegetation everywhere. Added to these luxuriant meadows, to this prodigal wealth of scattered groves, let the imagination picture green ripening tracts of highly cultivated arable land, where hamlets and farmsteads mark the most fertile spots, and all this vast, immeasurable plain, prepared for man like a new paradise, bounded far and near by mountains partly cultivated, partly overgrown with woods; it will then be possible to conceive the rapture with which I blessed the kind fate that had appointed me, for some time to come, so beautiful a dwelling-place.

Such a fresh glance into a new land where we are to take up our abode for a time, has this peculiar feature, at once pleasant and awe-inspiring, that the whole lies before us like an unwritten tablet. As yet no sorrows and joys which relate to ourselves are recorded on it; this bright, varied, animated plain is still mute for us; the eye is only fixed on such objects as are intrinsically important, and neither affection nor passion has given particular prominence to any one spot. But a presentiment of the future already troubles the young heart, and an unsatisfied craving secretly challenges whatever must or may be in store for us, and which, at all events, whether for good or ill, will imperceptibly assume the character of the place in which we find ourselves.

After my descent to the square, I still tarried a while in front of the venerable pile; but what I could not quite clearly explain to myself, either on this or subsequent occasions,

was that I looked upon this stone miracle as a monster, which would have struck terror into me, if its regularity had not made it possible to grasp the whole conception, whilst its finish gave pleasure to the eye. Yet I did not trouble myself with meditating on this contradiction, but suffered this astonishing monument quietly to work upon me by its presence.

I took small, but well-situated and pleasant lodgings, on the south side of the Fish Market, a fine long street, whose incessant life and bustle came to the relief of every idle moment. I then left my letters of introduction, and found among my patrons a merchant who, with his family, was a follower of that devout creed with which I was familiar, although, as far as the forms of worship were concerned, he had not separated from the Church. He was a man of intelligence, and entirely without cant. I found in the boarding-house, to which I had been recommended, and to which I also brought introductions, pleasant and entertaining company.

Most of my fellow-boarders were medical students. These, as is well known, are the only students who eagerly talk over their studies and profession even out of working hours. This lies in the very nature of the case. The objects that concern them are at once the most obvious to the senses, and the highest, the most simple, and the most complicated. Medicine employs the whole man, for it is in its turn concerned with the whole man. All that the young man learns bears directly upon an important, dangerous, but yet in many respects remunerative profession. He therefore devotes himself passionately to the pursuit of whatever is to be known and to be done, partly because it is interesting in itself, partly because it opens to him the joyous prospect of independence and wealth.

So at table I heard nothing but medical conversations, just as I had done formerly in Hofrat Ludwig's boarding-house. In our walks and in our pleasure-parties, too, not much else was talked about; for my fellow-boarders, good comrades as they were, had on other occasions become my companions, and their numbers were continually increased on all sides by men of like mind and like studies. The medical faculty in general outshone the others, both in the celebrity of its

professors and the number of its students, and I was carried along all the more easily, because my knowledge on all these points was just sufficient to kindle and fan my desire for more. At the commencement of the second half-year, therefore, I attended a course on chemistry by Spielmann, another on anatomy by Lobstein, and proposed to support by vigorous industry that respect and confidence which my unusual preliminary, or rather superfluous knowledge had already gained me in our society.

Yet this dissipation and division of my energies was not enough, my studies were to be once more seriously disturbed; for a remarkable political event stirred the whole town, and procured us a tolerably large succession of holidays. Marie Antoinette, Archduchess of Austria and Queen of France, was to pass through Strasburg on her way to Paris. Busy and copious preparations were instantly made for all those ceremonies by which the nation must be reminded that there are great ones in the world; what especially drew my attention was the building on an island in the Rhine between the two bridges, erected for her reception, and where she was to be surrendered into the hands of her husband's ambassadors. It was only slightly raised above the ground, had in the center a large hall, and on each side smaller ones; then followed other rooms, extending further back. Had it been more durably built, it might have served very well as a pleasure-house for the wealthy. But what particularly interested me, so that I did not grudge many a *Büsel* (a little silver coin then current) to gain repeated admittance from the porter, was the embroidered tapestry with which they had covered the whole interior. Here, for the first time, I saw a specimen of those tapestries worked after Raphael's cartoons, and this sight had a very decided influence on me, as it was my first acquaintance with the true and the perfect on a large scale, though only in copies. I came and went again and again, and could not gaze my fill; but in truth a vain longing troubled me because I would fain have been able to understand what interested me in so extraordinary a degree. But while the side-rooms were a delight and a refreshment to my eyes, the central hall was an abomination to me. This had been hung with many larger, more brilliant and costly hangings, bor-

dered with crowded ornamentation, and worked after modern French pictures.

I well remember the beauty and dignity of mien, as gay as it was lofty, of this youthful queen. Perfectly visible to us all in her glass carriage, she seemed to be jesting, in familiar conversation with the ladies of her suite, about the throng that poured forth to meet her train. In the evening we roamed through the streets to look at the various illuminations, but especially at the glowing spire of the minster, on which, both near and far, we could not sufficiently feast our eyes.

The queen pursued her way; the country people dispersed, and the city returned to its former quiet. Before the queen's arrival, the very reasonable regulation had been made, that no deformed persons, no cripples nor repulsive sufferers, should show themselves along her route. People joked about this, and I made a little French poem in which I compared the advent of Christ, who seemed to walk this earth particularly on account of the sick and lame, with the arrival of the queen, who scared these unfortunates away. My friends accepted it without comment; a Frenchman, on the contrary, who lived with us, criticized both language and meter very unmercifully, although, apparently with ample justice, and I do not remember that I ever again wrote a French poem.

Thus the mighty stream of courtly splendor had flowed past, leaving in me no other craving than that for Raphael's tapestries, which I would fain have contemplated daily and hourly in reverent adoration. Fortunately, my eager endeavors succeeded in interesting several persons in authority, so that these tapestries were taken down and packed up as late as possible. We now gave ourselves up again to the quiet, easy routine of our academic and social life; in the latter Salzmann, the registrar, president of our table, was still the general philosopher and guide. The good sense, ease, and dignity, which he always contrived to maintain amid all the jests, and often even little transgressions which he allowed us, won him the love and respect of the whole company, and the occasions on which he showed his serious displeasure, or interposed his authority in our little quarrels and disputes were very rare. Yet among them all I was the one who grew

most attached to him, and he liked to talk with me all the more because he found my accomplishments more varied and my judgment not so one-sided as was the case with the others. I also followed his directions in my outward behavior, so that he felt no embarrassment in publicly acknowledging me as his companion and comrade; for although the office he filled was not apparently influential, yet he administered it in a manner which redounded to his highest honor. He was registrar to the Court of Wards (*Pupillen-Collegium*), where, like the permanent secretary of a university, he had the management of affairs practically in his own hands. He had devoted his whole energies to these duties for many years, so that there was scarcely a family, rich or poor, which did not owe him gratitude: for surely there is hardly an official in the whole government administration who can earn more blessings or more curses than one who is the protector of orphans, or who by dishonesty or negligence squanders their possessions.

My state of health was now such as to second me entirely in any duty or undertaking; only there was a certain irritability left behind, which easily disturbed my equanimity. A loud sound was disagreeable to me, diseased objects awakened in me loathing and horror. But I was especially troubled by a giddiness which came over me every time I looked down from a height. I tried to remedy all these infirmities, and, wishing to lose no time, I adopted somewhat violent methods. In the evening, when they beat the tattoo, I went close to the host of drums, whose powerful roll and boom made the heart in one's breast throb to bursting. Alone I climbed the highest pinnacle of the minster spire, and sat in what is called the neck, under the nob or crown, for a quarter of an hour, before I would venture to step out again into the open air, where, standing upon a platform scarce an ell square, affording no particular hold, I could see the boundless prospect in front of me, while the near objects and ornaments concealed the church and everything below me on which I was standing. It was exactly like being carried up into the air in a balloon. I repeated these dreaded and painful sensations until I was quite indifferent to them, and I have since derived great advantage from this training, in mountain travels, geological studies, and on high buildings, where I

have vied with the carpenters in running on the bare beams and the cornices of the edifice, and in Rome itself, where similar risks must be run to obtain a nearer view of important works of art. Anatomy, also, was of twofold value to me, as it taught me to tolerate the most repulsive sights, while satisfying my thirst for knowledge. So I attended both the clinical course held by the elder Doctor Ehrmann, and his son's lectures on obstetrics, with the double view of understanding all physical states, and of freeing myself from any apprehension of repulsive sights. And I actually succeeded so well, that nothing of this kind ever made me lose my self-possession.

Our wishes are presentiments of the capabilities which lie within us, and harbingers of that which we shall be in a position to perform. Whatever we are able and would like to do, presents itself to our imagination, as lying without us and in the future; we feel a longing after that which we already possess in secret. Thus our eager grasp into the future converts a possibility into the realization of our dreams. Now if there is such a decided bias in our nature, then, with every step in our development, a part of our original desire will be fulfilled—under favorable circumstances in a direct way, under unfavorable in a circuitous way, which, however, will always lead us back to the other again. Thus we see men attain by perseverance to worldly wealth; they surround themselves with riches, splendor, and outward honors. Others strive yet more surely after intellectual advantages, and in time acquire for themselves a clear view of all things, peace of mind, and a feeling of security for the present and the future.

But there is a third ambition, compounded of both, the issue of which must be the most certain of success. When, namely, a man's youth falls in a pregnant age, when production outweighs destruction, so that he is early stirred to a presentiment of what such an epoch demands and promises: then, forced by outward inducements to active interest, he will lay hold on this side and on that, spurred by a desire for manifold activity. But so many accidental hindrances join with human limitations, that here we have unfinished beginnings, there an empty grasp, and wish after wish crumbles away. But if these wishes have sprung from a pure heart,

and are in conformity with the necessities of the times, we may composedly look on unfinished plans and frustrated efforts in the calm assurance that not only will the incomplete come to completion, the dropped threads be resumed, but that also many kindred things, things we have never attempted, never even thought of, will be brought to pass. And if, during our own lifetime, we see that performed by others, to which we ourselves felt an earlier call, but which we had perforce relinquished, with so much besides: then the inspiring feeling must be ours, that only mankind in its entirety is the true man, and that the individual can only then be joyous and happy when he has the courage to merge himself in the great whole.

### TENTH BOOK

It was my good fortune at this time to form an unexpected friendship, through which all the self-complacency, personal vanity, conceit, pride, and haughtiness that may have been latent or at work within me, were put to a very severe trial, a trial unique in its kind, and quite at variance with current custom, and therefore so much the more searching and unsparing.

For this most important event, one that was to have the weightiest consequences for me, was my acquaintance with Herder, and the closer friendship with him which sprang from it. He was then traveling companion to the Prince of Holstein-Eutin, who had fallen into a state of melancholia, and the two had come together to Strasburg. As soon as our society heard of his arrival, all its members longed for the opportunity of meeting him, but I was the first to meet with this good fortune, quite unexpectedly and by chance. I had gone to the Inn *zum Geist* to inquire after some distinguished stranger or other. I was just going upstairs when I saw a man in front of me, whom I might have taken for a clergyman. His powdered hair was in a queue, his black clothes were remarkable, but still more a long black silk cloak, the skirts of which were gathered up and tucked into his pocket. This somewhat striking, but yet, on the whole, elegant and pleasing figure, had already been described to me, so that it left me not the least doubt that he was the celebrated new-

comer, and I showed my certainty by addressing him by name. He asked me mine, which could be of no consequence to him; but my frankness seemed to please him, since he met it with like friendliness, and, as we went upstairs, he entered into an animated conversation with me. I have forgotten whom we visited; the important point is, that at parting I begged permission to wait on him at his own residence, and he consented in the kindliest manner. I did not neglect to avail myself repeatedly of this favor, and was more and more attracted by him. He had a gentle manner, which became him well without being exactly easy; a round face, an imposing forehead, almost a snub nose, a somewhat prominent, but highly characteristic, pleasing, and attractive mouth; a pair of coal-black eyes under black eyebrows, striking and expressive, though one was often red and inflamed. He questioned me in all manner of ways about myself and my position, and his power of attraction grew upon me daily. I was in general of a very confiding disposition, and with him especially I had no secrets. It was not long, however, before I struck an antagonistic note in his nature, which caused me considerable uneasiness. I had given him a full account of my youthful occupations and hobbies, and amongst others, of a collection of seals I had got together, principally by the help of our family friend, who had an extensive correspondence. I had arranged them according to the State Calendar, and by this means had become well acquainted with all the potentates and the greater and lesser principalities and powers, even down to the nobility. These heraldic insignia had often been of use to my memory, especially in the coronation festivities. I spoke of these with some complacency; but here he differed entirely from me, and not only stripped the subject of all interest, but contrived to make it look ridiculous and almost distasteful.

This spirit of contradiction in him was to trouble me still further, for he had resolved to remain in Strasburg, partly because he wished to separate from the prince, partly on account of an affection of his eyes. The complaint he suffered from is one peculiarly inconvenient and troublesome, and can be cured only by a painful, highly unpleasant and risky operation. The tear-bag is closed below, so that the moisture con-

tained in it cannot flow off to the nose, especially as the aperture by which this secretion should naturally take place is lacking in the adjacent bone. The bottom of the tear-bag must therefore be cut open, and the bone pierced: then a horse-hair is drawn through the lachrymal point, then down through the opened tear-bag, and the new channel thus put into connection with it, and this hair is moved backwards and forwards every day, in order to restore the communication between the two parts; and this cannot be done without first making a local incision to reach the affected organ.

Herder now separated from the prince, moved into lodgings of his own, and resolved to be operated on by Lobstein. Here my endeavors to blunt my susceptibilities stood me in good stead; I was able to be present at the operation, and to be serviceable and helpful to my distinguished friend in many ways. I also had ample opportunity of admiring his great firmness and endurance: for neither during the numerous surgical operations, nor during the continual painful dressings, did he show the least irritation, and of all of us seemed to be the one who suffered least. But in the intervals, indeed, his uncertain temper gave us much to put up with. I say *we*, for besides myself, a good-humored Russian, Peglow by name, was often with him. This man had formerly made Herder's acquaintance in Riga, and, though no longer a youth, was trying to perfect himself in surgery under Lobstein's guidance. Herder could be charmingly attractive and brilliant, but he could just as easily be bad-tempered and gruff. All men, indeed, have this twofold power of attraction and repulsion, some more, some less, some in longer, some in shorter spells, according to their nature; many can assume a semblance of control in this respect, few attain it in reality. As for Herder, the preponderance of his contradictory, bitter, biting humor was certainly due to disease and the sufferings arising from it. This often occurs in life; we do not sufficiently take into consideration the moral effect of a sickly constitution, and therefore judge many characters unjustly by assuming that all men are healthy, and requiring of them that they should act accordingly.

All the while he was undergoing this treatment I visited Herder morning and evening; I even spent whole days with

him, and was soon all the more ready to forgive him his chiding and fault-finding, as I daily learned to appreciate his great and beautiful qualities, his deep-sighted knowledge, and his wide views on life. The influence of this good-natured ranter was great and important. He was five years older than myself, which in youth makes a great difference to begin with; and as I acknowledged his true worth, and tried justly to appreciate what he had already produced, he necessarily gained a great ascendency over me. But the situation was far from easy; for those older persons, with whom I had associated hitherto, while they tried to mold me, had done so with indulgence, perhaps had even spoiled me by their tolerance; but from Herder, do what one would, it was vain to expect approval. Now, the conflict between my great affection and reverence for him on the one hand, and the dissatisfaction he excited in me on the other, gave rise to an inward struggle, the first of its kind which I had experienced in my life. Since his conversation always carried weight, whether he asked or answered questions, or communicated his opinions in any other way, my intercourse with him could not but open out new views to me every day and every hour. At Leipzig, I had grown accustomed to a narrow and circumscribed way of life, nor had my position in Frankfort helped to extend my general knowledge of German literature; for there my past mystical, religious, and scientific researches had rather led me into obscure paths, and I was practically ignorant of what had been passing for some years back in the wider literary world. Through Herder, however, I was at once to learn all its new aspirations and tendencies.

The treatment had already lasted longer than was reasonable, when Lobstein began to hesitate, and to go back upon himself, so that the affair seemed endless; Peglow, too, had confided to me in private that a favorable issue was hardly to be expected; the whole situation grew oppressive; Herder lost his patience and cheerfulness, he could not continue his work with the same assiduity, especially as they began to lay the blame of the failure of the operation upon his excessive mental exertions, and his constant, animated, and merry intercourse with us. Suffice it to say, that after so much trouble and suffering, the artificial tear-channel would not

form, and the intended passage remained blocked. It was necessary to let the wound heal to prevent the disease from growing worse. If, during the operation, we had been forced to admire Herder's fortitude under pain, the melancholy and even grim resignation with which he faced the idea that he must bear such a disfigurement for life, was so truly sublime, that it won him the reverence of all those who saw and loved him. This blot upon an otherwise expressive countenance must have been all the more trying for him, as he had succeeded in winning the affection of a most delightful lady whose acquaintance he had made in Darmstadt. It was probably mainly on her account that he submitted to the cure, so that, on his return, he might seem more at ease, more cheerful, and more pleasing in her eyes, and be in a position to confirm and clinch their tacit betrothal. However, he was anxious to leave Strasburg as soon as possible, and since his stay had hitherto been as expensive as it was unpleasant, I borrowed a sum of money on his behalf, which he promised to refund within a stated period. The time passed by, however, and no money came. My creditor did not actually dun me; but I was for several weeks in some embarrassment. At last letter and money came to hand, and here again he was true to himself; for, instead of thanks or apology, his letter contained nothing but satirical doggerel, which would have puzzled, if not alienated, another than myself; but it did not move me at all, for the conception I had formed of his worth was so invincible that it absorbed any feeling of an opposite nature which might have detracted from it.

One should never speak, least of all in public, of one's own or of others' faults, except for some useful purpose; that is why I am about to insert here certain observations which have forced themselves upon me.

Gratitude and ingratitude belong to those manifestations which occur continually in the moral world, and about which men can never agree among themselves. I usually distinguish between unthankfulness, ingratitude, and aversion to gratitude. The first is inborn in men, nay, created with them: for it arises from a happy lighthearted readiness to forget the unpleasant as well as the pleasant, which alone makes the continuation of life possible. Man stands in need of such

an infinite variety of assistance both in the past and in the present to make his life tolerable, that if he were always attempting to pay to sun and earth, to God and nature, to ancestors and parents, to friends and companions, the thanks due to them, he would have neither time nor feeling left to receive and enjoy new benefits. But if the natural man suffers this heedlessness to get complete control over him, a cold indifference gains on him more and more, until at last he comes to regard his benefactor as a stranger, to whom he may even do an injury, provided it be advantageous to himself. This alone can properly be termed ingratitude, and is merely an outcome of that barbarity to which our unbridled instinct must inevitably lead us. Aversion to gratitude, however, the rewarding of a benefit by ill-natured and sullen conduct, is very rare, and occurs only in eminent men, men who, conscious of great natural gifts, are, however, born in a low rank of society or in helpless circumstances, and who must, therefore, from their youth upwards, force their way step by step, and receive, at every point, help and support, which the coarseness of their benefactors often renders bitter and repugnant, since the benefits they receive are earthly, whereas those they confer are of a higher nature, so that any kind of real compensation is, strictly speaking, impossible. Lessing, with the fine knowledge of human ways which was his in the best years of his life, has in one place bluntly, but humorously, given his views on the subject. Herder, on the contrary, constantly embittered his best days, both for himself and others, because he knew not how to moderate, by strength of mind in later years, that ill-humor which circumstances had fostered in him in his youth.

Nor is this an unreasonable demand on our own powers: for a man's capacity for self-improvement receives prompt and friendly aid from the light of nature, always actively at work within him to enlighten him on his condition; and in general, in many points of moral culture, it is better not to tax our failings too severely, nor to strain too far after remote means of correcting them; for it is even possible to cure certain faults most easily by playful measures. Thus, for instance, we can excite gratitude in ourselves, keep it alive, and even make it indispensable, by mere force of habit.

In a biography it is fitting to speak of oneself. I am, by nature, as little grateful as any man, and besides being easily unmindful of benefits received, the passion excited by a momentary misunderstanding could very easily beguile me into ingratitude.

To obviate this, I accustomed myself, in the first place, in the case of all my possessions, to call to mind with pleasure how I came by them, and from whom I received them, whether by way of present, exchange, or purchase, or by any other means. In showing my collections I have made a point of mentioning the names of those through whom I obtained each article, even to lay stress on any occasions or accidents or remotest causes and coincidences by which things which are dear and of value to me have become mine. This gives life to our surroundings; they stand to us in a spiritual and touching relationship as we are reminded of their origin; and, by thus making past circumstances present to us, our momentary existence is ennobled and enriched, the originators of such gifts rise repeatedly before the imagination, encircled by pleasing memories, ingratitude becomes impossible, and to return the favor seems easy and desirable. This leads us at the same time to the consideration of our intangible possessions, and we love to call to mind to whom we owe our nobler endowments.

Before I turn my attention from that connection with Herder, which was so important and so rich in consequences for me, I must touch on yet another point. Nothing was more natural than that I should by degrees become more and more reserved towards Herder about those things which had hitherto contributed to my development, but more especially about such as still seriously occupied my attention at the moment.

I most carefully concealed from him my interest in certain subjects which had taken strong hold of me, and were, by degrees, molding themselves into poetic form. These were *Götz von Berlichingen* and *Faust*. The story of Götz's life had captivated my imagination. The figure of this rough, well-meaning, independent spirit, in wild days of anarchy, awakened my deepest sympathy. The wonderful Faust legend of the old puppet-shows struck many and responsive chords within me. I too had trodden the paths of knowledge, and

had early been led to see its vanity. In actual life, too, my experiences had been many, and I had returned more unsatisfied and troubled than before. So I carried these projects about with me, and delighted in them in my solitary hours, yet without committing anything to paper.

How ignorant I must have been of modern literature, may be gathered from the mode of life which I led at Frankfort, and from the studies to which I had devoted myself; and my residence in Strasburg had been of no advantage to me in this respect. But when Herder came, he not only helped us by his wide knowledge, but also by showing us many of the most recent publications. Among these he particularly praised to us the *Vicar of Wakefield* as an excellent work, and insisted on introducing us himself to the German translation by reading it aloud to us.

His method of reading was quite unique; any one who has heard him preach will have some idea of it. His delivery, whatever the subject, this romance included, was perfectly grave and simple, entirely removed from any attempt at dramatic imitation; he even avoided that variety which is not only permitted, but even required, in rendering an epic—a slight change of tone when different persons speak, by which what every one says is brought into relief, and the actor is distinguished from the narrator. Without being monotonous, Herder let everything proceed in the same tone, just as if nothing was present before him, but all was merely historical; as if the shadows of these poetic figures did not act and live before him, but only glided gently by. Yet this style of readings from his lips had an infinite charm; for, as he was extremely susceptible, and knew how to appreciate a work of the kind in all its aspects, he was able to reproduce the merits of the whole all the more clearly, as one was not disturbed by the sharp enunciation of details, nor prevented from grasping the total impression which the whole was meant to produce.

A Protestant country clergyman is, perhaps, the most beautiful subject for a modern idyll; he stands, like Melchizedek, for priest and king in one. With the most innocent state which can be imagined on earth, that of the husbandman, he is usually connected by similarity of occupation, as well as

by similar family relationships; he is a father, the head of a family, a tiller of the soil, and thus in every respect a member of the community. And his higher calling rests upon this pure, beautiful, earthly basis; to him it is given to guide men through life, to care for their spiritual education, to bless them at all the turning-points of their existence, to instruct, to strengthen, to console them, and, if consolation is not sufficient for the present need, to call up and guarantee the hope of a happier future. Imagine such a man, with upright human sentiments, strong enough not to deviate from them under any circumstances, and by these qualities raised above the common herd, from which one can expect neither righteousness nor constancy; grant him the learning necessary for his office, as well as a cheerful, equable activity, which can be even passionate, since it neglects no opportunity of doing good,—and his endowments will be complete. But at the same time add the necessary limitation of circumstance that he may not only have to move in a narrow sphere, but may even be transferred to a narrower; endue him with good-nature, placability, resolution, and every other praiseworthy attribute that springs from firmness of character, and beyond all this a cheerful spirit of compliance, and a smiling indulgence for his own failings and those of others,—and you will have drawn a fairly accurate picture of the worthy Vicar of Wakefield.

The delineation of this character as his life goes on in the midst of joys and sorrows, the ever-increasing interest of the story, due to the combination of the natural with the marvelous and the unexpected, make this novel one of the best which has ever been written; it has, moreover, the great advantage of being perfectly moral, nay, in the best sense, Christian—for it represents the reward of good will and perseverance in the right, strengthens an implicit confidence in God, and attests the final triumph of good over evil; and all this without a trace of cant or pedantry. The author was preserved from both of these by a greatness of mind that shows itself throughout in the form of irony, which helps to make this little book as full of wisdom as it is of charm. The author, Dr. Goldsmith, has without question great insight into the strength and weakness of the moral world; but at the same time he can thankfully acknowledge that he is an

Englishman, and be duly appreciative of the advantages which his country and his nationality afford him. The family, which he minutely pictures for us, can barely lay claim to the ordinary comforts of the middle classes, and yet comes into contact with the highest rank; its narrow circle, which is to contract still further, touches the outskirts of the great world through the natural course of social life; this little skiff floats on the agitated waves of English society, and for weal or woe it must expect injury or help from the vast fleet which sails around it.

I may suppose that my readers know this work, and have it in their minds; and if there is any one to whom the name is new, or who is induced by my words to read it again, I am sure I shall have earned their gratitude. For the sake of the former, I would merely say in passing, that the vicar's wife is of that good, busy sort, who will not allow herself and her family to want for anything, but who is also for that very reason somewhat proud of herself and of them. There are two daughters,—Olivia, handsome and concerned with outward shows, Sophia, charming and more serious-minded; nor will I omit to mention the blunt, industrious son Moses, always eager to follow in his father's steps.

If Herder could be accused of any fault in his reading aloud, it was impatience; he could not wait until his hearer had properly digested a certain part of the narrative, so as to be able to judge of it correctly; hurrying on, he wanted to see immediate effects, and yet was generally displeased with their manifestation. He blamed the excess of feeling which I showed at every step. I felt like a man, and like a young man; it all seemed living, true, and present to me. He only valued the literary form, but saw clearly that I was absorbed by the story, and this annoyed him. Peglow's observations, which were not the most refined, were still worse received; but he was especially angry at our want of perception in not noticing the use our author made of contrasts, and in allowing ourselves to be moved and carried away by them without remarking the recurring artifice. He could not forgive us for not seeing at once, or at least suspecting from the very beginning, that Burchell himself is the lord of whom he is speaking when he all but discloses his identity by passing

in his narrative from the third to the first person; and when, finally, we rejoiced like children at the discovery and the consequent transformation of the poor needy wanderer into a rich and powerful lord, he immediately recalled the passage, which, in accordance with the author's own design, we had overlooked, and read us a powerful lecture on our stupidity. It will be seen from this that he regarded the book merely as a work of art, and required us to do the same, though we were still in that condition when it is perfectly allowable to let works of art affect us as though they were simply natural products.

I did not let myself be at all disturbed by Herder's invectives; for, fortunately or unfortunately, it is the lot of the young that, when once anything has produced an impression on them, this impression must become a part of themselves, either for good or for evil. The above work had produced a great effect on me, for which I could not account, but it was true that I felt in harmony with that stoical frame of mind which rises above every circumstance, above fortune and misfortune, good and evil, life and death, and thus enters into possession of an ideal world. I could not, indeed, become conscious of this until later; at the moment, however, it occupied a great part of my thoughts; but I could never have dreamed that I should be so soon transported from this world of fiction into its living counterpart.

My fellow-boarder, Weyland, would from time to time enliven his quiet, laborious life by visiting his friends and relatives in the country (for he was a native of Alsace), and did me many a good turn on my little excursions, by introducing me to various places and families, sometimes in person, sometimes by letters of introduction. He had often spoken to me of a country clergyman who lived near Drusenheim, six leagues from Strasburg, in possession of a good living, an intelligent wife, and attractive daughters. He always spoke warmly of the hospitality and charming character of this family. This was more than sufficient to attract a young knight who had already accustomed himself to spend all his leisure days and hours on horseback and in the open air. So we decided to take this excursion, and my friend had to promise that when he introduced me he would say neither

good nor ill of me, would treat me with perfect indifference, and allow me to make my appearance somewhat poorly and negligently, if not meanly, attired. He consented in the hope of some amusement.

It is a pardonable whim in men of consequence occasionally to conceal their external advantages, so as to allow their own inner human nature free scope. That is why there is always something so attractive in the incognito of princes, and the adventures which result from it; they appear as disguised divinities, who are entitled to place a double value on all the good offices shown to them as individuals, and are in such a position that they can either make light of what is disagreeable or avoid it. That Jupiter should be well pleased in his incognito with Philemon and Baucis, and Henry the Fourth with his peasants after a day's hunting, is quite in the course of nature, and we approve it; but that a young man of no importance or reputation should take it into his head to amuse himself by assuming an incognito, might be construed by many as an unpardonable piece of arrogance. Yet since it is not here a question of the praise or blame attaching to such thoughts and actions, but rather of their actual occurrence, we will on this occasion, for the sake of our own amusement, pardon the youngster his self-conceit; and the more so, as I must here allege, that from youth upwards, a love of disguising myself had been implanted in me by my stern father himself.

On this occasion, partly by cast-off clothes of my own, partly by borrowed garments and by the way of dressing my hair, I had, if not disfigured myself, yet at least made myself look so odd, that my friend could not help laughing as we went, especially as I knew how to imitate to perfection the bearing and gestures of the clumsy horsemen, generally known as "Latin riders." The fine road, the splendid weather and the near neighborhood of the Rhine, put us in the best of humors. At Drusenheim we stopped a moment, he to make himself spruce, and I to rehearse my part, from which I was afraid I might now and then lapse. The country here has the characteristics of all the open, level parts of Alsace. We rode by a pleasant footpath through the meadows, soon reached Sesenheim, left our horses at the tavern,

and walked leisurely towards the parsonage. "Do not be taken aback," said Weyland, showing me the house from a distance, "because it looks like a miserable old farmhouse, it is all the younger inside." We stepped into the court-yard; the look of the whole delighted me: for it had exactly that charm which we call picturesqueness, and which had so enthralled me in Dutch art. The effect which time exercises on all human handiwork was plainly visible. House, barn, and stable were just at that point of dilapidation where, indecisive and doubtful between preserving and rebuilding, the owner often neglects the one without being able to accomplish the other.

As in the village, so in the court-yard, all was quiet and deserted. We found the father, a retiring yet friendly little man, quite alone, for the family were in the fields. He bade us welcome, and offered us some refreshment, which we declined. My friend hurried away to look after the ladies, and I remained alone with our host. "You are perhaps surprised," said he, "to find me in such poor quarters in a wealthy village, and with a lucrative living; but," he continued, "it all comes from irresolution. It has been promised me long ago by the parish, and even by persons in authority, that the house shall be rebuilt; many plans have been already drawn up, examined and altered, none of them entirely rejected, and none carried into execution. This has gone on so many years, that I scarcely know how to control my impatience." I made him an answer such as I thought likely to sustain his hopes, and to encourage him to push the matter on more vigorously. He then proceeded to describe most confidentially the personages on whom such things depended, and though he was no great delineator of character, I could easily understand how the whole business had come to be delayed. The tone of friendly intimacy in the man was characteristic; he talked to me as if he had known me for ten years, while there was nothing in his look from which I could have suspected that he was directing any attention to me. At last my friend came in with the mother. She seemed to look at me with quite different eyes. Her countenance was regular, and intelligent in expression; she must have been beautiful in her youth. Her figure was tall and spare,

but not more so than became her years, and when seen from behind, she still looked youthful and attractive. The elder daughter then came bounding in; she inquired after Frederica, just as both the others had also done. The father assured them that he had not seen her since the three of them had gone out together. His daughter went out again to look for her sister; the mother brought us some refreshment, and Weyland continued his conversation with the husband and wife, which turned entirely on common acquaintances and experiences; for it is usual, when friends meet after some length of time, for them to ask and receive information on the whole circle of their acquaintanceship. I listened, and learned what I might expect from these new connections.

The elder daughter came hastily back into the room, uneasy at not having found her sister. They were anxious about her, and blamed her for one bad habit and another; only the father said, with calm composure, "Let her alone; she will come back all right." At this instant she actually appeared at the door; and then indeed a lovely star arose in this rural firmament. Both daughters still wore German dress, as it was then called, and this almost obsolete national costume became Frederica particularly well. A short, white, full skirt, with a flounce, not too long to reveal the neatest little feet and ankles; a tight white bodice and a black taffeta apron,—thus she stood on the boundary between town and peasant girl. Slender and light, she tripped along with buoyant step, and her neck seemed almost too delicate to bear the weight of the thick, fair plaits on the neat little head. The look of her merry, cheerful blue eyes was frank and free, and her pretty turned-up nose peered as freely into the air as if there could be no care in the world; her straw hat hung on her arm, and thus, at the first glance, I had the delight of seeing and appreciating her at once in her full grace and loveliness.

I now began to act my character in moderation, half ashamed of playing a joke on such good people. I had plenty of time to observe them well: for the girls continued the previous conversation, and that with animation and humor. All neighbors and relations were again discussed, and there seemed, to my imagination, such a swarm of uncles

and aunts and cousins, comers and goers, god-parents and guests, that I felt transported into the liveliest of worlds. All the members of the family had addressed a few words to me, the mother looked at me every time she came in or went out, but Frederica was the first to enter into conversation with me, asking me, as I took up and glanced through some music that was lying about, if I played too? When I told her I did, she asked me to play something; but the father would not allow this, for he maintained that it was proper that the guest should be first entertained with some music or song.

She played several things with some skill, and in the usual country style, and on a harpsichord, too, that the schoolmaster should have tuned long ago, if he had only had time. She was next to sing a song, one in a tender, melancholy strain, and here she failed. She rose and said, smiling, or rather with that look of happy serenity which was a characteristic of her face, "If I sing badly, I cannot lay the blame on the harpsichord or the schoolmaster; but let us go out of doors; then you shall hear my Alsatian and Swiss songs; they sound much better."

During supper-time, an idea which had already struck me, filled my mind to such a degree, that I grew meditative and silent, though the sprightliness of the elder sister, and the charm of the younger, roused me repeatedly from my reveries. My astonishment at finding myself actually transported into the very midst of the Wakefield family was beyond all expression. The father, indeed, could not be compared with that excellent man; but where will you find his like? On the other hand, all the dignity there peculiar to the husband, here appeared in the wife. To see her was to reverence and fear her. She bore the traces of a wise upbringing in her quiet, easy, cheerful, and engaging manner.

If the elder daughter had not Olivia's far-famed beauty, yet she was well made, lively, and rather impetuous; she seemed full of activity, and lent a helping hand to her mother in all things. But it was by no means difficult to put Frederica in the place of Primrose's Sophia; for little is said of the latter, but it is only taken for granted that she is sweetly lovable; and this girl was really so. Now as like occupations

and like conditions, wherever they occur, produce similar, if not the same effects, so here too many things were talked about, and many things happened, which had already taken place in the Wakefield family. But when at last a younger son, long announced and impatiently expected by the father, sprang into the room, and boldly sat himself down by us, taking but little notice of the guests, I could scarcely help exclaiming, "And Moses too!"

The conversation at table gave us further insight into this country and family circle, for their talk turned on various droll incidents which had happened at different times. Frederica, who sat by me, took the opportunity to describe to me different localities in the neighborhood which it was worth while to visit. As one story always calls forth another, I was better able to join in the conversation, with several anecdotes of my own, and as, in addition, there was no stint of good country wine, I stood in danger of forgetting my *rôle:* my more prudent friend, seeing this, took advantage of the beautiful moonlight, and proposed a walk, to every one's satisfaction. He gave his arm to the elder, I to the younger, and thus we went through the broad meadows, paying more attention to the heavens above us than to the earth, stretching away in the darkness at our feet. But Frederica's talk savored little of moonlight; the clearness of her words turned night into day, and there was nothing in what she said to indicate or excite feeling, except that her conversation included me more than it had done, since she described to me her own position, as well as the neighborhood and her acquaintances, in the light in which I should probably become acquainted with them; for she hoped, she added, I would prove no exception, but would visit them again, as all strangers gladly did who had once been to see them.

It was very pleasant to me to listen in silence to the description she gave of the little world in which she moved, and of the persons whom she particularly valued. The picture of her life which I gained from her words was at once so clear and so attractive that it produced a marvelous effect on me; for I felt both a deep regret that I had not lived with her sooner, and at the same time a positively painful feeling of envy towards all who had hitherto had the good fortune

to be near her. I followed closely, as if I had a right to do so, all her descriptions of men, whether under the names of neighbors, cousins, or god-parents, and my conjectures inclined now this way and now that; but how could I discover anything in my complete ignorance of all the circumstances? At last she became more and more talkative, and I more and more silent. It was so pleasant to listen to her, and as I could only hear her voice, while her face, as well as the rest of the world, floated dimly in the twilight, it seemed to me as if I saw into her heart, which could not but be pure, since it could open out to me with such unconstrained directness.

When my companion retired with me to the guest-chamber, which was prepared for us, he at once, with self-complacency, broke out into exclamations of amusement, and took great credit to himself for having surprised me so much with this counterpart of the Primrose family. I chimed in with his humor and expressed my gratitude. "Upon my word," he cried, "the story is quite complete. The two families may very well be compared, and the gentleman in disguise here may assume the honor of passing for Mr. Burchell; moreover, since scoundrels are not so necessary in common life as in novels, I will for this time undertake the *rôle* of the nephew, and behave myself better than he did." However, I immediately changed this conversation, pleasant though it might be to me, and asked him, first, to tell on his honor, if he really had not betrayed me? His hearty disavowal quite convinced me. They had indeed inquired, he said, after the merry, boon companion who boarded at the same house with him in Strasburg, and of whom they had heard all sorts of marvelous nonsense. I now passed on to other questions: Had she ever been in love? Was she now in love? Was she engaged? He replied to all in the negative. "Really," I replied, "such natural cheerfulness is inconceivable to me. Had she loved and lost, and again recovered herself, or had she been betrothed,—in both these cases I could account for it."

Thus we chatted together far into the night, and I was awake again at dawn. My desire to see her once more seemed irresistible; but while I dressed, I was horrified at the disgraceful wardrobe I had so wantonly selected. Each article

of clothing I put on made me seem more despicable in my own eyes; for everything had been selected to produce this effect. My hair I might perhaps have set to rights; but when at last I struggled into the worn-out, borrowed gray coat, and saw what a ridiculous appearance the shortness of the sleeves gave me, I fell into despair, all the more as, in the small looking-glass, I could see myself only piecemeal, and each part looked more ridiculous than the other.

During this process my friend awoke, and with the satisfaction of a good conscience, and in pleasurable anticipation of the coming day, beamed at me from under the quilted silk of our counterpane. I had long been envying him his fine clothes, as they hung over the chair, and had he been of my size, I would have carried them off before his eyes, changed my dress outside, and hurrying into the garden, left my accursed husk for him; he would have been good-humored enough to get into my clothes, and thus the tale would have come to a merry ending early in the morning. But that was not now to be thought of, nor did there seem to be any other feasible solution. To reappear before Frederica in the figure which my friend could fittingly describe as that of an industrious and gifted but poor student of theology,—before Frederica, who the evening before had spoken so kindly to my disguised self,—that was altogether impossible. There I stood, vexed and thoughtful, summoning all my powers of invention; but they deserted me! However, when my friend, luxuriously stretched upon his pillows, after fixing his eyes upon me for a while, burst suddenly into a loud laugh, and exclaimed, "No! there's no denying it, you look disgraceful!" I replied impetuously, "And I know what I will do. Good-by, and make my excuses!" "Are you mad?" he cried, springing out of bed and trying to detain me. But I was already out of the door, down the stairs, out of the house and yard, and off to the inn; in an instant my horse was saddled, and I rushed off mad with vexation, galloping towards Drusenheim, then through it, and on beyond.

As I now thought myself safe, I rode more slowly, and then began to feel how infinitely against my will it was to go away. But I resigned myself to my fate, called up the memory of last night's walk with perfect calm, and cherished the

secret hope of seeing her soon again. But this quiet resignation soon changed into impatience again: I now determined to ride rapidly to the town, change my dress, and take a good, fresh horse, for then, so my passion led me to believe, I could at all events return by dinner-time, or, which was more probable, by dessert, or even towards evening, and entreat my forgiveness.

I was just about to put spurs to my horse to execute this plan, when another, and, as seemed to me, a very happy idea passed through my mind. In the inn at Drusenheim, the day before, I had noticed a son of the landlord very neatly dressed, and had seen him again early this morning, busy with his farm-work, as he greeted me from his court-yard. He was of my figure, and had for the moment even reminded me of myself. I waited for no second thoughts. I had hardly turned my horse round, when I was back in Drusenheim; I took him to the stables, and in a few words put my proposal before the fellow, namely, that he should lend me his clothes, as I had a merry jest on hand at Sesenheim. Before I had finished my sentence he agreed with enthusiasm, delighted that I should wish to make some sport for the young ladies; they were, he said, such delightful girls, especially Miss Riekchen,[1] and the parents, too, liked things to go merrily and brightly at all times. He considered me attentively, and as from my appearance he might well take me for a poor starveling, he said, "If you want to get into favor, this is the right way." In the meanwhile we had been getting on fast with our change of dress, though, as a matter of fact, he was making a poor bargain in trusting his holiday clothes to me on the strength of mine; but he was honest-hearted, and, moreover, had my horse in his stable. I was soon sufficiently presentable, put on a consequential air, while my friend apparently gazed on his counterpart with complacency. "Done, Sir Brother!" said he, giving me his hand, which I shook heartily, "don't come too near my girl; she might make a mistake!"

My hair, now restored to its full growth, he easily parted in imitation of his, and looking at him, several times it occurred to me that it would be a good jest to blacken my eye-

[1] Abbreviation for Frederica.

brows with a burnt cork, and bring them nearer together in imitation of his. "Now, have you no business at the parsonage," I said, as he handed me his be-ribboned hat, "so that I might announce myself there quite naturally?" "Certainly," he replied, "but then you will have to wait two hours. A woman has been confined in our house; I will offer to carry the cake to the parson's wife,[2] and you can take it over. Pride must pay its penalty, and so must a joke." I resolved to wait, but these two hours seemed unending, and I was dying of impatience when the third hour had come and gone before the cake came out of the oven. At last I got it quite hot, and hastened away with my credentials, the sun shining brightly on me, and escorted some way by my counterpart, who promised to come after me in the evening and bring me my clothes. But this I firmly declined, and stipulated that I should bring his garments back myself.

I had not ridden far with my present, which I carried in a neatly-knotted napkin, when, in the distance, I saw my friend coming towards me with the two ladies. My heart beat more uneasily than it should have done under such a coat. I stood still, took breath, and tried to consider how I should begin; and now I first remarked that the disposition of the ground was very much in my favor; for they were walking on the other side of the brook, and this, together with the strips of meadow through which it ran, kept the two footpaths pretty far apart. When they were just opposite to me, Frederica, who had already seen me a long way off, cried, "George, what are you bringing there?" I had enough sense to take off my hat and cover my face with it, while I held the cake in its napkin well up in front of me. "A christening cake;" she cried; "how is your sister?" "Quite well," said I, trying to talk in a strange dialect, if not exactly in Alsatian. "Take it to the house!" said the elder sister, "and if you do not find my mother, give it to the maid; but wait for us, we shall soon be back,—do you hear?" I hurried on in the happy hope that, as the beginning had been so lucky, all the rest would follow suit, and soon reached the parsonage. There was no one to be found in house or

[2] The general custom of the country villages in Protestant Germany on such interesting occasions.

kitchen; not wanting to disturb the old gentleman, whom I supposed busy in the study, I sat down on the bench before the door, the cake beside me, and covered my face with my hat.

I can rarely remember feeling a pleasanter sensation. To sit once more on this threshold, which, a short time before, I had crossed stumbling in despair; to have already seen her once more, to have heard her dear voice again so soon after my grief had pictured a long separation, to be expecting her every moment and to await a discovery at which my heart throbbed, but which was, in this ambiguous case, a discovery without shame; for this was, to begin with, a merrier prank than any of those they had laughed at so much yesterday. Love and necessity are the best of masters; they were both acting in concert here, and their pupil was not unworthy of them.

But the maid came stepping out of the barn. "Well! did the cakes turn out all right?" she cried to me; "how is your sister?" "All right," I said, and pointed to the cake without looking up. She took up the napkin, muttering, "Now, what's the matter with you again to-day? Has Bärbchen been kind to some one else again? But you should not make us pay the penalty. A pretty couple you will make if you carry on so!" Her loud voice called the pastor to the window to ask what was the matter. She pointed him out to me; I stood up and turned towards him; but still kept my hat over my face. He spoke a few kind words to me, and asked me to stop a while, so I turned towards the garden, and was just going in, when the pastor's wife called to me as she went through the yard gate. I availed myself of the fact that the sun was shining straight in my eyes to keep on sheltering behind my hat, and gave her a loutish scrape; but she passed on into the house, telling me not to go before I had eaten something. I now walked up and down the garden; everything had hitherto been most successful, yet I breathed hard and fast as I realized that the young people must soon be back again. But the mother came up to me most unexpectedly, and was just going to ask me a question, when she looked me in the face, and seeing what I could conceal no longer, the words stuck in her throat. "I look for George,"

she said, after a pause, "and whom do I find? Is it you, young gentleman? How many shapes have you, then?" "In earnest only one," I replied; "in jest as many as you like." "I will not spoil the jest," she smiled; "go out behind the garden into the meadow until it strikes twelve, then come back, when you will find I have started the fun." I did as she told me; but as I was going along the meadows, beyond the hedges of the village gardens, some country people came towards me on the footpath, and put me in some embarrassment. I turned aside into a little wood, on the top of a hill near by, intending to hide myself there till the appointed time. Yet what was my astonishment when I entered it; for there before me was a neat little clearing, with benches, each of which afforded a charming view of the countryside. First the village and the steeple, then Drusenheim, and behind it the woody islands of the Rhine; in the opposite direction the Vosges mountains, and last the Strasburg minster. All these shining pictures were set in leafy frames, so that it would be hard to imagine anything brighter or more delightful. I sat down on one of the benches, and noticed on the largest tree an oblong little board with the inscription, "Frederica's Rest." It never occurred to me that I might have come to disturb this rest; for a budding passion has this lovely characteristic, that, as it is unconscious of its origin, so it has no conception of an end, and, being itself full of joy and gladness, can have no presentiment that it may also be the cause of grief.

I had scarcely had time to look about me and was losing myself in sweet reveries, when I heard somebody coming; it was Frederica herself. "George, what are you doing here?" she cried from a distance. "Not George!" I cried, running towards her, "but one who craves forgiveness of you a thousand times." She looked at me in astonishment, but soon collected herself, and said, fetching a deep breath, "You horrid man, how you frighten me!" "The first disguise has led me into a second," I exclaimed; "the former would have been unpardonable had I had any idea whom I was going to see; but this one you will certainly forgive, for it is the garb of those whom you always treat with kindness." Her pale cheeks had flushed a lovely rosy red. "You shall not be worse

off than George, at any rate! But let us sit down! I confess the fright you gave me has made me shaky." I sat down beside her, in great agitation. "We know everything already, as far as what happened this morning, from your friend," she said, "now tell me the rest." She did not need to ask me twice, for I described to her my horror at the figure I cut yesterday, and my rushing from the house, so comically, that she burst into hearty, rippling laughter; then I went on to what followed, with all modesty indeed, yet with sufficient passion for my words to pass for a declaration of love under the guise of a story. At last I sealed my joy at finding her again, by a kiss upon her hand, which she let lie in mine. If she had provided all the conversation during last night's moonlight walk, I now, on my part, richly repaid the debt. The pleasure of seeing her again, and being able to say to her all that I had kept back yesterday, was so great that, in my eloquence, I did not notice how thoughtful and silent she had grown. She drew several deep breaths, and over and over again I begged her pardon for the fright I had given her. How long we may have sat there, I have no idea; but suddenly we heard some one call "Riekchen, Riekchen." It was her sister's voice. "Now we shall have sport," she said, restored to perfect cheerfulness; "she is coming on my side," she added, bending so as to half conceal me; "turn away, so that she may not recognize you at once." The sister came towards us, but not alone; Weyland was with her, and both, when they saw us, stood still, as if petrified.

The sight of flames bursting fiercely from a peaceful roof, or the meeting of a monster whose deformity is at the same time revolting and terrifying, would not strike us with such fierce horror as that which seizes us when, unexpectedly, we see with our own eyes what we should have believed morally impossible. "How is this?" cried the elder, with all the haste of one in terror. "How is this? you and George, hand-in-hand! What am I to understand by this?" "Dear sister," Frederica hesitatingly replied, "poor fellow,—he is begging something of me; he has something to beg of you too, but you must forgive him beforehand." "I do not understand—I cannot understand——" said her sister, shaking her head and looking at Weyland, who, with his usual calm, stood

looking on in silence. Frederica rose and drew me after her. "No hesitating!" she cried, "but pardon given as soon as asked!" "Now do!" I said, stepping nearer to her; "I have need of pardon!" She drew back with a loud shriek, and covered with blushes; then she threw herself on the grass, laughing immoderately, and as though she would never stop. Weyland smiled, well pleased. "You are a splendid fellow," he said, and shook me by the hand. He was not usually demonstrative, but his handshake had something hearty and enlivening about it; yet he was sparing of this also.

When we had recovered and collected ourselves a little, we set out to return to the village. On the way I learned how this singular meeting had taken place. Frederica had separated from the other two to rest in her little nook for a moment before dinner, and when the other two returned to the house, the mother had sent them to call Frederica as quickly as possible, because dinner was ready.

The elder sister showed the most extravagant delight, and when she learned that the mother had already discovered the secret, she exclaimed, "Now we have still to play the trick on my father, my brother, the man-servant, and the maid." When we reached the garden-hedge, Frederica insisted upon going first into the house with my friend. The maid was busy in the kitchen-garden, and Olivia (for so the elder sister shall be called in these pages) called out to her, "Stop; I have something to tell you!" She left me standing by the hedge, and went to the maid. I saw they were speaking very earnestly. Olivia pretended to her that George had quarreled with Barbara, and was now anxious to marry her. The girl was by no means displeased; I was now called up, and was to confirm what had been said. The pretty, plump lass cast down her eyes, and kept them so until I had got quite close to her. But when, suddenly, she saw a strange face, she too gave vent to a loud scream and ran away. Olivia bade me run after her and hold her fast, so that she should not get into the house and make a noise; while she herself meant to go in and see what her father was doing. On the way Olivia met the servant-boy, who was in love with the maid; in the meantime I had hurried after the girl, and held her fast. "Just think! what good luck!" cried Olivia; "it's

all over with Barbara, and George is to marry Liese." "I have expected that long enough," said the good fellow, and stood nursing his vexation.

I had given the maid to understand that all we had to do was to deceive the father. We went up to the lad, who turned and tried to get away; but Liese brought him back, and he, too, when undeceived, gave vent to the most extraordinary contortions. We went together to the house. The table was laid, and the father already in the room. Olivia, keeping me behind her, stepped to the threshold, and said, "Father, have you any objection to George's dining with us to-day? but you must let him keep his hat on." "Oh, very well!" said the old gentleman, "but why such an unusual thing? Has he hurt himself?" She dragged me forward as I was with my hat on. "No!" she said, leading me into the room, "but he has a bird-cage under it, and the birds might fly out and make a dreadful fuss; for they are all loose." The father was amused at the joke, without precisely knowing what it meant. This instant she took off my hat, scraped and bowed and made me do the same. The old man looked at me and recognized me, but without losing his clerical self-possession. "Fie, fie, Sir Candidate!" he exclaimed, raising a threatening finger at me; "you have changed saddles very quickly, and in the course of a night I have lost an assistant, who only yesterday promised me so faithfully that he would often take my pulpit for me on week-days." He then laughed heartily, bade me welcome, and we sat down to table. Moses came in much later; for, being the youngest and most spoilt, he had got into the habit of not hearing the dinner-bell. Besides, he took little notice of the company, not even when he contradicted them. To make more sure of him, they had put me, not between the sisters, but at the end of the table, where George often used to sit. As he came in at the door behind me, he gave me a hearty clap on the shoulder, and said, "Good appetite, George!" "Many thanks, squire!" I replied. The strange voice and the strange face startled him. "Well, don't you think," cried Olivia, "that he looks very like his brother?" "Yes, from behind," replied Moses, who managed to recover his composure immediately, "every one does." He did not look at me again, but gave himself up with

zeal to devouring the courses, to make up for lost time. Then he was pleased to go out, as he often did, and busied himself in the yard or garden. At dessert the real George came in, and helped to make matters still more lively. They began to banter him on his jealousy, and blamed him for making another rival of me; but he was modest and clever enough to get out of his difficulties, and, in a half-confused manner, succeeded in mixing up himself, his sweetheart, his counterpart, and the young ladies with each other, to such a degree, that at last nobody could tell about whom he was talking, and they were only too glad to leave him to consume a glass of wine and a bit of his own cake in peace.

At table there was some talk of going for a walk; but the suggestion did not appeal much to me in my peasant's clothes. However, the ladies, early that very morning, when they learned who had run away in such a desperate hurry, had remembered that a fine hunting-coat belonging to a cousin of theirs, who sometimes wore it when he was visiting there, was hanging in the clothes-press. But I declined it, joking to all appearance, yet in reality from a feeling of vanity, not wishing to spoil, by impersonating the cousin, the good impression I had made as the peasant. The father had gone to take his afternoon-nap; the mother, as usual, was busy with her housekeeping. But my friend proposed that I should tell them some story, and I immediately consented. We went into a spacious arbor, and I gave them a tale which I have since worked out in writing under the title of *The New Melusina*.[3] I will merely say that I succeeded in gaining the true reward of all such inventors and narrators, which is to awaken curiosity, to fix the attention, to provoke over-hasty solutions of impenetrable riddles, to baffle expectations, to bewilder by heaping wonder upon wonder, to arouse sympathy and fear, to cause suspense, to stir and at the same time satisfy the feelings by an ingenious transition from apparent earnest to merry jest, and finally to leave the imagination materials for fresh conceptions, and the mind subjects for further thought.

[3] This is introduced in *Wilhelm Meister's Wanderjahre*.

ELEVENTH BOOK

In telling my tale in the arbor at Sesenheim, I had interwoven the commonplace and the marvelous with the best skill I could muster, and when I drew to a close, I found that my hearers, who had followed me throughout with exceptional interest, were quite spell-bound by the novelty of my story. They urged me to write the tale, that they might often hear it again, by reading it among themselves, and to others. I promised this all the more readily, as I hoped it would form a pretext for repeating my visit, and give me an opportunity of forming a closer acquaintance. The party broke up for a while, and all were inclined to feel that, after a day spent so pleasantly, the evening might perhaps fall rather flat. I was freed from this anxiety by my friend, who asked permission for us both to take leave at once, because, as an industrious academical student, regular in his studies, he wished to pass the night at Drusenheim, and to be in Strasburg early in the morning.

When I returned to my occupations in the city, I felt them more than usually burdensome, for a man active by nature forms plans beyond the reach of his capacity, and overburdens himself with work. This may go on for a while, till some physical or moral impediment intervenes to show him clearly the disproportion of his powers to the task he has undertaken.

I pursued jurisprudence with enough diligence to take my degree with some credit. Medicine charmed me, because it gave me glimpses of nature on every side, even if it could not interpret it; and I was further attached to it by circumstances and habit. To society I was obliged to devote some time and attention; for in many families I had formed ties of intimacy and affection.

In a worse humor than usual, because my indisposition was more violent after dinner, I attended the clinical lecture. The cheerful ease of manner with which our honored instructor led us from bed to bed, his minute observation of significant symptoms, his diagnosis of the general course of the complaint, his fine Hippocratic method, by which, without theory, and from individual experience alone, he deduced

scientific facts, the skill of his concluding address—all this attracted me to him, and made this foreign branch of science, of which I only caught a glimpse through a crevice, all the more charming and fascinating to me. My disgust at the patients gradually decreased, as I learned to forget their physical condition in the ideas suggested by it, which rendered possible the recovery and restoration of human form and human life. He probably was particularly interested in me, and in my singularities, and pardoned the strange anomaly which brought me to his lectures. On this occasion he did not conclude his lecture, as usual, with a lesson applicable to some special disease we had been observing, but said cheerfully, "Gentlemen, the holidays are before us; make use of them to brighten your spirits. Studies should not only be pursued earnestly and diligently but also with cheerfulness and ease of mind. Give your bodies exercise, and enjoy the beauties of the country on horse-back and on foot. The native-born will enjoy what is familiar to him, and the foreigner will find new impressions, and pleasant reminiscences for the future."

There were only two of us to whom this admonition could be directed. May the recipe have been as obvious to the other as it was to me! I thought I heard a voice from heaven, and made all the haste I could to order a horse and attire myself suitably. I sent for Weyland, but he was not to be found. This did not thwart my resolution, but my preparations unfortunately took a long time, and I could not get off as early as I had hoped. Fast as I rode, night overtook me. The way was not to be mistaken, and the moon shone on the lover's path. The night was windy and eerie, and I dashed on, that I might not have to wait till morning before I could see her.

It was already late when I put up my horse at Sesenheim. The landlord, in answer to my question, whether there was still a light in the parsonage, assured me that the ladies had only just gone home; he thought he had heard they were still expecting a visitor. This did not please me, as I would have liked to be the only one. I hastened on, late as it was, so that at least I might be the first to arrive. I found the two sisters sitting at the door. They did not seem much

astonished, but I was, when Frederica whispered in Olivia's ear, loud enough for me to hear, "Did I not say so? Here he is!" They took me to a room, where they had prepared some slight refreshment. Their mother greeted me as an old acquaintance; and the elder sister, when she saw me in the light, burst into loud laughter, for she had little self-control.

After this somewhat strange reception, we began at once to talk freely and merrily, and though the mystery remained unexplained that evening, it was revealed to me next day. Frederica, it seems, had predicted that I should come; and who does not feel some satisfaction at the fulfillment of a foreboding, even when it is a mournful one? All presentiments, when confirmed by the event, give man a higher opinion of himself, whether because he likes to think himself possessed of such fine susceptibilities as to feel a premonition at a distance, or of such penetration as to be able to draw necessary but still uncertain conclusions. Even Olivia's laugh remained no secret; she confessed that it had amused her to see me this time so carefully and punctiliously decked out. Frederica, on the other hand, preferred not to put it down to personal vanity, but rather to a wish to please her.

Early in the morning Frederica asked me to take a walk with her. Her mother and sister were busy preparing to receive several guests. And so by the side of the girl I loved, I enjoyed the glories of a Sunday morning in the country, just as Hebel has depicted them in his incomparable verse.

There are women whom we like best to see in a room, others who look better in the open air. Frederica belonged to the latter. Her whole personality, her figure never appeared to better advantage than as she walked along a raised footpath; the grace of her carriage seemed to vie with the flowery earth, and the steady brightness of her face with the blue sky. And she carried this refreshing atmosphere which surrounded her back into the house with her. It was easy to see how clever she was in clearing away difficulties, and with what ease she could smooth away the painful impression left by any small unpleasantness.

The purest joy which we can feel with respect to one we love is to find that she pleases others. Frederica shed a happy

influence around her wherever she went. In walks, she flitted about, an animating spirit, and knew how to fill up any occasional gaps which might occur. We have already mentioned the lightness of her movements, and she was most graceful when she ran. Just as the deer seems to be best fulfilling its destiny as it bounds lightly over the sprouting corn, so the peculiar essence of her nature seemed best to reveal itself as she ran with light steps over mead and furrow, to fetch something forgotten, to look for something lost, to summon a distant couple, or to give any necessary orders. At such times she was never out of breath, and never lost her balance.

The father, who often accompanied us through fields and meadows, could not always find a suitable companion. So I would often join him, when he never failed to recur to his favorite theme, and to tell me in detail about the plans for the new manse. He particularly regretted that he could not get back the carefully finished sketches to consider them and ponder this or that improvement. I observed that the lost might be easily remedied, and offered to prepare a ground-plan, which was, after all, the main thing. He was highly delighted, and settled that we should have the assistance of the schoolmaster, and hurried off at once to stir him up, so that the foot-rule might be in readiness early on the morrow.

When he had gone, Frederica said, "It is good of you to humor my dear father on his weak point, and not, like others, who get weary of the subject, avoid him, or break it off. I must, indeed, confess to you that the rest of us do not want this building; it would be too expensive for the congregation, and for us too. A new house, new furniture! Our guests would not feel any more comfortable with us, now they are once accustomed to the old building. Here we can give them liberal hospitality; there we should find ourselves straightened in more pretentious surroundings. That is how the matter stands; but do not stop being kind to him. I thank you for it, from my heart."

The measurement of the house took place the following day. It was rather a slow proceeding, as I was as little accustomed to such labors as the schoolmaster was. At last I succeeded in making a passable sketch. The good vicar told me his views, and was not displeased when I asked permission

to prepare the plan more at my leisure in town. Frederica took leave of me happily; she was convinced of my affection, and I of hers; and the six leagues now seemed a trifling distance. It was so easy to reach Drusenheim by diligence, and by this vehicle, as well as by ordinary and extraordinary messengers, to keep up a connection, in which George was to be the bearer of dispatches.

No sooner had I arrived in town than I occupied myself in the early hours (for I had no wish for much sleep) with the plan, which I drew out as carefully as I could.

In the city many occupations and dissipations awaited me, from the midst of which I frequently called myself to thoughts of my beloved, by means of a correspondence, which we regularly established. Even in her letters she was always the same; whether she told anything new, or alluded to well-known occurrences, lightly described or cursorily mentioned, it was always as if, even with her pen, she were going and coming, running and bounding with a step as light as it was sure. I too loved to write to her, for the act of calling up her virtues to my mind increased my affection even in absence, so that this intercourse was little inferior to a personal one, and, indeed, in time I came to think it pleasanter and dearer.

We had spent some time together, happily and peacefully, when that rogue Weyland had the audacity to bring with him to Sesenheim a copy of the *Vicar of Wakefield,* and when they were talking of reading aloud, to hand it over to me unexpectedly, and quite as a matter of course. I managed to collect myself, and read as brightly and with as little embarrassment as I could. The faces of my hearers soon grew interested, and they seemed nothing loath to be called upon to institute a comparison.

Now the comparison forced on them by a roguish friend produced the most favorable consequences for our young lovers on the fair banks of the Rhine. We do not think of ourselves when we look in a mirror, but we feel ourselves, and take ourselves for granted. And it is the same with those mirrors of the soul, in which we recognize our manners and inclinations, our habits and peculiarities, as in a shadow-picture which we would fain grasp and hold in a brotherly embrace.

We grew more and more accustomed to being always together, till it was an accepted fact that I belonged to their circle. The affair was allowed to take its course and no one asked what the result would be. For how many parents are compelled to let their sons and daughters continue for a while in some such unsettled state, until chance determines it for life far better than any pre-concerted plan could possibly have done.

Among such surroundings a poetic inspiration, which I had not felt for a long time, returned to me. I composed for Frederica many songs to well-known melodies. They would have made a charming little volume; a few of them still remain, and can easily be traced among my other poems.

As my unusual studies and other circumstances often compelled me to return to town, our affection found new ways of manifesting itself, and so saved us from all that unpleasantness which is usually an annoying consequence of such little love-affairs. Though far from me, she yet worked for me, and devised new amusements against my return; though far from her, I labored for her, that by some new gift or new idea I might be able to appear before her in some new aspect. Painted ribbons had then just come into fashion; I at once painted one or two pieces for her, and sent them on with a little poem, as on this occasion I was forced to stop away longer than I had anticipated. In order to fulfill and even go beyond my promise to her father of bringing him a new and complete plan, I persuaded a young adept in architecture to work at it instead of me. The pleasure he took in the task was in proportion to his affection for me, and he found further incitement in the hope of winning a favorable reception in so delightful a family. He finished ground-plan, elevation, and section of the house; court-yard and garden were not forgotten, and a detailed but very moderate estimate was added, so as to make the execution of an extensive and costly project seem easy and feasible.

These proofs of our friendly endeavors gained us the kindest reception; and the good father, seeing we had the desire to serve him, expressed one wish more; it was the wish to see his pretty but self-colored chaise adorned with flowers and other ornaments. We showed ourselves anxious to please

him. Colors, brushes, and other requisites were brought from the tradesmen and apothecaries of the neighboring towns. But that a true "Wakefieldian" mistake might not be wanting, it was not until everything had been most industriously and brightly painted over, that we observed that we had used a wrong varnish which would not dry; neither sunshine nor drought, neither fair nor wet weather were of any avail. In the meanwhile we were obliged to make use of an old tumble-down coach, and nothing was left us but to scrape off the decorations with more labor than we had painted them. Our dislike of the work was further increased when the girls entreated us, for heaven's sake, to work slowly and cautiously, in the hope of sparing the groundwork; this, however, after our operations, could never again be restored to its former brilliancy.

These disagreeable little incidents, which happened at intervals, troubled us, however, just as little in our cheerful life as they would have done Dr. Primrose and his amiable family; for many an unexpected pleasure befell both ourselves and our friends and neighbors. Weddings and christenings, the erection of a building, an inheritance, a prize in the lottery, all such events were announced from family to family and enjoyed in common. We shared all joys together, like a common property, and enhanced them by our mutual affection. It was not the first nor the last time that I found myself in families and social circles at the very moment of their highest prosperity, and if I may flatter myself that I contributed something towards the brightness of such seasons, I am, on the other hand, open to the reproach that it was equally due to me, if such times passed the more quickly and vanished the sooner.

Since my real object in going to Strasburg had been to take my degree, it was part of the irregularity of my life, that I treated this primary business as a matter of entirely secondary importance. I had very easily put aside all anxiety as to my examination, but I now had to think of the *disputation,*[1] for on my departure from Frankfort I had promised my father, and firmly resolved to write one. It is the fault of those who can do many or even most things, that they imag-

[1] A polemic dissertation written on taking a university degree.

ine they can do everything, and, indeed, it is necessary for youth to feel in this way if it is ever to achieve anything. I had managed to acquire a very fair general survey of jurisprudence and all its subdivisions, and was sufficiently interested in individual points of law, so that with good Leyser for my model, and the help of my small portion of commonsense, I hoped to acquit myself tolerably well. In law great changes were just then taking place; judgments were to be delivered in stricter accordance with equity, all rights established by usage were daily in danger of being compromised, and in the criminal department especially great innovations were impending. As for myself, I felt forcibly how unequal I was to treat the legal subject I had chosen. I lacked the actual knowledge, and the natural promptings from within, urging me to such subjects. Neither was there any impulse from without, for quite another branch of study (medicine) had completely carried me away. As a rule, if I was to take any interest in a thing, it must be because I could gain something from it, could see in it some promise of good results and future prospects. I had already jotted down part of the subject-matter, and had collected notes. I now took my books of extracts in hand, and reconsidered the points I wished to maintain, and the general scheme of arrangement I meant to follow, and worked on for a time. But I was soon sensible enough to perceive that I could not get on, and that to treat a special subject, special and unflagging industry is requisite, indeed, that such a special task cannot be successfully accomplished unless one is, if not master, at any rate an old hand in the whole subject.

The friends to whom I confided my difficulties thought me ridiculous, because it is as satisfactory, nay, even better, to dispute upon these as upon a treatise, and in Strasburg this was a not uncommon practice. I was by no means averse to such an expedient, but when I wrote to my father on the subject, he expressed a desire for some regular piece of work which he was assured I could very well prepare, if I only chose to do so, and allowed myself proper time. I was now compelled to seize upon some general topic, and to choose something which I had at my fingers' ends. Ecclesiastical history was almost better known to me than secular, and that

conflict in which the church, the publicly recognized worship of God, is engaged, and always will be engaged, on two sides, had always deeply interested me. For on the one hand it stands in unending conflict with the state, by its desire for supremacy; on the other with individuals, by its wish to gather all men to itself. The state, on its side, will not concede superior authority to the church, and the individual resists its restraints. The state desires everything for public, universal ends; the individual for ends touching the home, the heart, the feelings. From my childhood upwards I had been a witness of such struggles, in which the clergy offended now their superiors, now their congregations. So my youthful mind had come to the conclusion that the state—as legislator—had the right to determine a form of worship, in accordance with which the clergy should teach and to which they should conform, but the outward and external forms of which the laity should be bound strictly to follow; while there should be no question about any individual's private thoughts, feelings, or beliefs. By this means I felt confident all collision could be avoided. I therefore chose for my *disputation* the first half of this theme, namely, that the legislator was not only authorized, but bound to establish a certain form of worship, from which neither the clergy nor the laity might free themselves. I developed this theme partly historically, partly by argument, showing that all public religions had been introduced by leaders of armies, kings, and men of authority; that this had even been the case with Christianity. The example of Protestantism lay close at hand. I went to work at this task all the more boldly, as I really only wrote it to satisfy my father, and desired and hoped nothing better than that it might not pass the censorship. I had imbibed from Behrisch an unconquerable dislike to seeing anything of mine in print, and my intercourse with Herder had revealed to me but too plainly my own insufficiency, and had quite matured in me a certain mistrust of my own powers.

As I drew almost entirely on my own resources in this composition, and wrote and spoke Latin with fluency, the time I spent on the treatise passed very pleasantly for me. The subject-matter had at least some foundation, the style, as a piece of rhetoric, was tolerable, the whole fairly well rounded

off. As soon as I had finished it, I went through it with a good Latin scholar, who, although he could not improve my style as a whole, yet easily removed all glaring defects, so that the whole production was fit to appear. A fair copy was at once sent to my father, who, though disapproving of me for not working out any of the subjects previously taken in hand, still, as a thorough Protestant, could not but be pleased with the boldness of the plan. My singular views were tolerated, my exertions praised, and he hoped for excellent results from the publication of the work.

I now handed over my papers to the faculty, who fortunately behaved in a manner as prudent as it was polite. The dean, a vigorous, clever man, began with many praises of my work, then went on to touch on questionable points, which he gradually contrived to represent as dangerous, and concluded by saying that it might not be advisable to publish this work as an academical dissertation. The *aspirant* had shown himself to the faculty as a thoughtful young man, full of promise; they would willingly, not to delay the affair, allow me to dispute on *theses.* I could afterwards publish my treatise, either in its present form or further elaborated, in Latin, or in another language. This would be easy for me anywhere as a private individual and a Protestant, and I should have the pleasure of winning more genuine and more general applause. I could hardly hide from the good man what a weight his words rolled from my heart; at every new argument which he advanced, to avoid hurting or annoying me by his refusal, my mind grew more at ease, and so did his own at last, when, quite unexpectedly, I offered no opposition to his reasons, but, on the contrary, declared them extremely obvious, and promised to follow his advice and guidance. So I resumed my studies with my *repetent. Theses* were chosen and printed, and the *disputation,* thanks to the opposition of my fellow-boarders, went on with great merriment, and even with ease, for my old habit of finding out passages in the *Corpus Juris* was very serviceable to me, and helped me to pass for a well-informed man. A good refection, according to established custom, concluded the ceremony.

My father, however, was very dissatisfied that my little treatise had not been properly printed as a *disputation,* be-

cause he had hoped that I should gain honor by it on my return to Frankfort. He therefore wished to publish it privately, but I represented to him that the subject, which was here only sketched, might be more fully developed at some future time. He put by the manuscript carefully for this purpose, and many years afterwards I found it among his papers.

I took my degree on August 6th, 1771.

Yet amid all this hurry and confusion I could not resist seeing Frederica once more. Those were painful days, whose memory has not remained with me. When I held out my hand to her from my horse, the tears stood in her eyes, and my heart was heavy. I rode along the footpath towards Drusenheim, and here one of the most singular forebodings took possession of me. I saw, not with the eyes of the body, but with those of the mind, my own figure coming towards me, on horseback, and on the same road, attired in a dress which I had never worn;—it was pike-gray with some gold about it. But as I shook myself out of this dream, the figure had entirely disappeared. It is strange, however, that eight years afterwards, I found myself on that very road, on my way to pay one more visit to Frederica, wearing the dress of which I had dreamed, and that, not from choice, but by accident. Whatever one may think on such matters in general, in this instance my strange illusion helped to calm me in this farewell hour. It softened for me the pain of leaving for ever lovely Alsace, with all that it had brought me, and now that I had at last put behind me the painful strain of parting, I regained my peace of mind on a peaceful and pleasant journey.

## TWELFTH BOOK

The wanderer had now at last reached home,—more healthy and cheerful than on the first occasion,—but there was still about him something over-strained, which did not point to perfect health of mind. From the outset I placed my mother in the position of having to establish some kind of compromise in the differences continually arising between my father's legitimate love of order and my own manifold eccentricities. At Mainz, a boy who played the harp had

so pleased me, that, as the Fair was close at hand, I invited him to Frankfort, and promised to give him lodging and to encourage him. This occurrence is another example of a peculiarity which has cost me so much in my lifetime,—that is, a pleasure in seeing younger people gather round me and attach themselves to me, until in the end I find myself burdened with their fate. One unpleasant experience after another failed to cure me of this inborn instinct, which even to-day, in spite of my clear conviction, threatens from time to time to lead me astray. My mother foresaw more clearly than I, how strange it would seem to my father, if a strolling musician were to go from such a respectable house as ours to taverns and public-houses to earn his bread. Hence she provided him with board and lodging in the neighborhood. I recommended him to my friends; and thus the lad did not fare badly. Several years after, I saw him again: he had grown taller and more ungainly, without having made much progress in his art. My good mother, well pleased with this first attempt at reconciling and hushing up our differences, little thought that this art of hers would in the near future become absolutely necessary. My father, leading a contented life amid his old tastes and occupations, was comfortably at ease, like one who has carried out his plans in spite of all hindrances and delays. I had now taken my degree, which meant that the first step was made towards the civic career opening before me. My *Disputation* had won his applause; a further examination of it, and many preparations for a future edition now occupied his time. During my residence in Alsace, I had written many little poems, essays, notes on travel, and casual jottings. He found amusement in collecting these under headings, in arranging them, and in suggesting their completion; and was delighted with the hope that my hitherto insuperable dislike to seeing any of these things printed might soon be overcome. My sister had collected around her a circle of intelligent and attractive women. Without being overbearing, she ruled them all, for her good sense helped her to overlook much, and her kindly feeling often smoothed over difficulties; moreover, she was in the position to play the confidant, rather than the rival. Of my older friends and companions, I found in Horn a constant,

loyal friend and a cheerful companion. I also became intimate with Riese, who did not fail to put my wits to the test, and to keep them in practice by constantly opposing contradiction, doubt and negation to that dogmatic enthusiasm into which I too readily fell. Others, by degrees, joined this circle, whom I shall have occasion to mention later; but among those who rendered my new sojourn in my native city pleasant and profitable to me, the brothers Schlosser certainly take the first place.

It would be impossible to tell how much my intercourse with such a circle helped to invigorate and widen my powers. They liked me to read aloud my completed or unfinished works; they encouraged me, when I freely gave them details of my plans, and blamed me when at every opportunity I laid aside what I had already commenced. *Faust* had already advanced some way; *Götz von Berlichingen* was gradually framing itself in my mind; the study of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries occupied much of my time.

By his *Hermannsschlacht*,[1] and its dedication to Joseph the Second, Klopstock had stirred up intense excitement. The Germans, freeing themselves from the Roman yoke, were nobly and powerfully represented, and this picture was calculated to awaken the nation to a consciousness of its powers. But since in times of peace patriotism is practically confined to every one sweeping his own doorstep, minding his own business, and learning his own lesson, that all may go well in his house, the national feeling excited by Klopstock found no object on which to exercise itself. Frederick had vindicated the honor of one part of Germany against the united world, and it was free to every member of the nation, by lauding and venerating this great prince, to share in his victory; but what was to come of this new, warlike spirit of defiance? what direction should it take, what effect should it produce? At first it merely assumed poetic form, and under the spur of this incitement there was an outburst of those bardic songs (*Bardenlieder*), afterwards the object of so much censure and ridicule. There were no external enemies to fight; so people fashioned tyrants for themselves,

[1] The fight of Herman, the "Arminius" of Tacitus, against the Romans.

and for this purpose princes and their servants were made to lend their characters, first only in general outline, but gradually in fuller detail. Now it was that poetry attached itself vehemently to that interference with the administration of justice, which we have criticized above; and it is remarkable to see how many poems of that time are imbued with a spirit destructive of every class distinction whether monarchic or aristocratic.

For my own part, I continued to make poetry the expression of my own feelings and fancies. Little poems like the "Wanderer" belong to this time; they were inserted in the Göttingen *Musenalmanach.* But from whatever taint of the mania above referred to had crept into my blood, I endeavored to free myself soon after in *Götz von Berlichingen,* for here I described how in disordered times this loyal and upright man resolves to take the law and the executive power into his own hands, but is driven to despair when he is forced to appear in an equivocal and even rebellious light in the eyes of the sovereign, whom he recognizes and reveres.

My resolve to give free play to the idiosyncrasies of my inner nature, and, at the same time, to remain receptive to the characteristic influences of the external world, transported me into the strange atmosphere in which *Werther* was designed and written. I sought to free my inner life from every alien influence, to look with love on all around me, and to allow all beings, from man downwards to the lowest comprehensible creature, to act upon me, each after its own kind. Thus arose a wonderful affinity with the several objects of nature, and a heartfelt concord and harmony with the whole, so that every change, whether of place and country, of hour and season, or of any other part of the natural order, affected me profoundly. The eye of the painter was added to that of the poet, the beautiful rural landscape, brightened by its smiling river, increased my love of solitude, and favored my silent contemplation of all that lay around me.

But ever since I had left the family circle in Sesenheim, and again my circle of friends at Frankfort and Darmstadt, I felt in my heart a void I could not fill; I was therefore in the mental condition in which our inclinations, provided

they are slightly veiled, steal upon us unawares and frustrate all our good resolutions.

Now that the author has reached this stage in his undertaking, he feels for the first time light-hearted about his work, for only from this point onwards will the book assume its intended shape. It has no pretensions to completeness; it is only intended to fill in the gaps of an author's life, to complete much that is fragmentary, and to preserve the memory of lost and forgotten ventures. But it is not my purpose, nor would it be possible, to do over again what I have already once accomplished. Moreover, the poet would now call in vain upon his darkened mental powers to conjure up again the charm which made those days in Lahnthal so delightful to him. Fortunately his good genius has made this unnecessary by impelling him, while still in the vigor of youth, to fix and describe the impressions of the immediate past, and to seize the happy moment for making them public. That we are here referring to that small volume known as *Werther* is sufficiently evident, but we shall have occasion by degrees to give further details both with regard to the characters and to the opinions it contains.

Among the young men, attached to the embassy, who had to prepare themselves for their future official career, was one whom we were accustomed to call simply the "Bridegroom." He was remarkable for his calm and even manner, the clearness of his views, the decision of his words and actions. His cheerful activity, his persevering industry recommended him so favorably to his superiors, that an early appointment was promised him. On the strength of these expectations he ventured to betroth himself to a lady by the name of Charlotte or Lotte, who entirely accorded with his tastes and temperament. After the death of her mother, she had shown energy and resource as the head of a numerous young family, and had alone sustained her father in his widowhood, so that a future husband might hope for the same care for himself and his children, and look for great happiness in his home. Even those who had no such personal aims in view admitted that she was a desirable helpmate. She was one of those who, if they do not inspire ardent passion, are nevertheless destined to attract the benevolent regard of all. A neat and lis-

som figure, a pure and healthy temperament, with the glad energy of life attendant on it, a direct and simple handling of daily duties—all these were hers in full measure. I always felt happy in the contemplation of such qualities, and liked to frequent the society of her who possessed them; and though I might not always find opportunity to render the couple any actual service, I shared with them rather than with others the enjoyment of those innocent pleasures which youth can always find at hand, and enjoy without much cost or effort.

Now if it is true, as has been said, that the highest happiness lies in a sense of longing, and if genuine longing can only be felt for something unattainable, everything now conspired to make the youth whom we are accompanying on his wanderings the happiest of mortals. An affection for one betrothed to another, the effort to incorporate the masterpieces of foreign literature in our own, the endeavor to portray natural objects, not only with words, but also with style and pencil, without any proper technical knowledge,—each of these separately would have sufficed to make the heart full and to oppress the spirit. But new events occurred to tear the youth from his state of blissful melancholy, and to create fresh causes of unrest.

Schlosser disclosed to me that he had formed, first a friendly, then a closer connection with my sister, and that he was only looking for an early appointment to be united to her. This statement surprised me to some extent, although I might have found it out long ago from my sister's letters; but we easily pass over that which might hurt the good opinion which we entertain of ourselves, and I now realized for the first time that I was really jealous about my sister; a feeling which I was the less able to conceal from myself, as, since my return from Strasburg, our relationship had become even more intimate. How much time had we not spent in telling each other each little concern of the heart, the trifling love affairs, and other such matters, which had occurred in the interval. In the field of imagination, too, had not a new world been opened to me, into which I was looking forward to conduct her also? My own little productions, and a world-wide wealth of poetry, were gradually to be made known to her. Thus I made for her *impromptu* translations of those passages of

Homer, which would most interest her. I read aloud to her, in German, Clarke's literal translation, as fluently as I could; my version generally found its way into metrical turns and endings, and the vividness with which its images had come home to me, the vehemence with which I expressed them, removed all the blemishes of an involved construction; and her mind followed what my mind laid before her. We passed many hours of the day in this way; and then if any friends of hers met together, there was a unanimous demand for the Wolf Fenris and the Ape Hannemann, and how often have I not been obliged to repeat in every detail how Thor and his comrades were deluded by the magic of the giants! And that is why these legends have left such a pleasant impression on my mind, so that I prize them as highly as anything my imagination can recall. I had also drawn my sister into my Darmstadt circle of friends, and even my wanderings and occasional absences only bound us closer together, for I talked with her by letter of everything that happened to me, imparted to her every little poem, even if only a note of exclamation, and she was the first to see every letter which I received, and every answer I wrote. All this eager intercourse had ceased since my departure from Frankfort: my residence in Wetzlar was not fruitful enough for such a correspondence, and my attachment to Lotte may have encroached upon my attentions to my sister; be this as it may, she felt lonely, perhaps neglected, and was, therefore, all the more ready to lend an ear to the honest wooing of an honorable man, who, serious, reserved, and worthy of all confidence and esteem, passionately lavished on her an affection which he was generally slow to bestow. I was now forced to resign myself, and try not to grudge my friend this happiness, though my self-confidence did not fail to assure me in secret, that if the brother had not been absent, the friend would never have so prospered in his suit.

My friend and probable brother-in-law was now very anxious that I should return home, because my presence would render possible that freer intercourse for which his suddenly awakened passion seemed ardently to crave. Therefore, on his hasty departure, he elicited from me a promise to follow him without delay.

So, after he had left, I parted from Lotte, with a purer conscience indeed than I had done from Frederica, but still not without pain. Again in this case my inclination had by habit and indulgence grown more passionate than was right on my side, while, on the other hand, she and her betrothed maintained a cheerful self-control which could not have been lovelier or more delightful, and it was the very sense of security resulting from this calm, which made me forget every danger. Yet I could not conceal from myself that this adventure must come to a speedy end: for my friend's marriage with the charming Lotte waited for nothing but a momentarily expected promotion; and as every man of any resolution will always make a virtue of necessity, I embraced the determination to take my leave voluntarily before any unbearable contingency should drive me away.

### THIRTEENTH BOOK

My eye, sharpened by nature, again turned to the contemplation of art, for which the beautiful Frankfort collections, both of paintings and engravings, afforded me the best opportunity; I was also much indebted to the kindness of MM. Ettling and Ehrenreich, but especially to the help of Nothnagel. To see the revelation of nature in art became with me a passion, which, at its height, must have appeared to other even passionate amateurs almost like madness; and how could such an inclination be better fostered than by a constant study of the splendid work of the Dutch painters? In order that I might acquire some practical knowledge in this line, Nothnagel gave me a little room, where I found everything requisite for painting in oils, and painted from nature some simple subjects of still life, one of which, a tortoise-shell knife-handle, inlaid with silver, so astonished my master, who had left me for an hour, that he maintained one of his assistants must have been with me during the time.

Had I patiently gone on practicing on such objects, catching their light and shade and the peculiarities of their surface, I might have acquired some amount of practical skill, and opened out a way to something higher. But I fell into the mistake of all dilettanti—that of beginning with what is most difficult, and of attempting impossibilities. I soon

became involved in greater undertakings, in which I stuck fast, both because they were beyond my technical powers, and because I could not always keep steadily at work with that loving attention and patient industry, which can help even a beginner to accomplish something.

At the same time, I was once more transported into a higher sphere, by finding an opportunity of purchasing some fine plaster casts of antique heads. The Italians, who frequented the fairs, often brought with them good specimens of the kind, and usually sold them, after taking an impression of them. By this means I set up quite a little museum, and gradually collected the heads of the Laocöon, of his sons, and of Niobe's daughters. I also bought miniature copies of the most important works of classic art from the collection left, on his death, by a patron of art, and sought in this way to revive, as much as possible, the great impression made upon my mind in Mannheim.

Even while working in this way to cultivate, foster, and maintain any talent, taste, or other inclination of the kind that might be in me, I devoted a good part of the day, according to my father's wish, to my profession of advocate, and chance afforded me an excellent opportunity for practicing it. After my grandfather's death, my uncle Textor had become councilor in his place, and entrusted to me such little offices as I was able to perform; and the brothers Schlosser did the same. I studied the documents; and my father also read them with much pleasure, as through his son, he again saw himself in a sphere of activity to which he had long been a stranger. We first talked the matters over, and I then had no difficulty in drawing up the necessary memoranda. We had an excellent clerk at hand, on whom one could rely for all legal technicalities; I delighted in this occupation all the more as it brought me nearer to my father, who, being perfectly satisfied with my conduct in this respect, was prepared to look with an eye of indulgence on all my other pursuits, in the eager expectation that I should now soon reap a harvest of fame as an author.

Now since every epoch has a certain uniformity of character, due to the diffusion of its ruling tendencies and opinions through all the departments of life, so in the domain of

law those maxims were gradually followed, which were already prevalent in religion and morals. Among the attorneys—the younger generation—and then among the judges—the elder—a spirit of humanity was diffused, and all vied with each other in being as humane as possible, even in legal affairs. Prisons were improved, crimes pardoned, punishments lightened, legitimations made easy, separations after unfortunate marriages encouraged, and one of our eminent lawyers won high fame by contriving, after hard fighting, to gain admittance for the son of an executioner to the college of surgeons. Vain was the opposition of guilds and corporations; one dam after another was broken down. Toleration in religious matters was not merely taught, but practiced, and the civil constitution was threatened with a still greater innovation, when, with much wisdom, penetration, and force, an effort was made to recommend to the good nature of the age, greater forbearance towards the Jews. These new subjects for legal treatment, lying, as they did, outside the scope of law and tradition, and only asking for impartial investigation and kindly sympathy, required at the same time a more natural and animated style. This opened a happy field for the energies of us younger men, and we disported ourselves in it with delight. I can still remember how an imperial councilor's agent, in a case of the sort, sent me a very polite letter of commendation. The French *plaidoyers* served as stimulating models.

We were thus in a fair way to become better orators than jurists, a fact to which the conscientious Georg Schlosser once called my attention reproachfully. I had told him that I had read to my clients a statement written with much energy in their favor, and that they had evinced much satisfaction. Whereupon he replied, "In this case you showed yourself rather author than advocate. We must never ask how such a statement may please the client, but how it may please the judge."

But the occupations to which one devotes one's day are never so serious and pressing that one cannot find time enough in the evening to go to the play, and this was the case also with me. The lack of a really creditable stage had drawn my thoughts constantly to the German drama in the hope

of discovering how one might best and most effectively contribute to its advancement.

My enduring interest in Shakespeare's works had so widened my mind, that the narrow compass of the stage and the short time allotted to a representation, seemed to me quite insufficient for the requirements of a subject of importance. The life of the worthy Götz von Berlichingen, written by himself, impelled me to the historic mode of treatment; and my imagination found in it such wide scope, that it swept my dramatic form along with it, beyond all theatrical bounds, in the endeavor to approach more and more closely to the living reality. In the course of my work on this subject I had discussed it thoroughly with my sister, who was interested, heart and soul, in such matters. I reverted to the topic so often, without, however, setting definitely to work, that at last, in her impatient desire for my success, she urgently entreated me not to be always casting my words into space, but, once for all, to set down on paper the thoughts which were so vividly in my mind. Determined by this instigation, I began to write one morning, without having made any previous sketch or plan. I wrote the first scenes, and in the evening read them aloud to Cornelia. She highly approved of them, but only conditionally, since she doubted if I should ever continue them; and even openly expressed her want of faith in my perseverance. This was only a further incitement; I wrote the next day, and again the third. Our daily discussions increased my hopes, step by step the whole conception gained in vividness, the subject-matter I had already mastered. Thus I held to my work, without a break, keeping straight on my course, and looking neither backwards nor forwards, neither to the right nor to the left; and in about six weeks I had the pleasure of seeing the manuscript stitched.

Gloomy reflections, which lead those who yield to them along paths which have no turning, could not have developed so decidedly in the minds of our German youth, had not an outward stimulus incited and encouraged these morbid tendencies. Such a stimulus they found in English literature, especially in its poetry, for its great beauties are bound up with a grave melancholy, which is easily caught by those who

love to read it. The intellectual Briton, from his youth up, sees himself surrounded by a world of stirring interest, which stimulates all his powers; he perceives, sooner or later, that he must gather all his wits together if he hopes to come to an understanding with it. How many of their poets have in their youth led a loose and riotous life, and soon found themselves justified in complaining of the vanity of earthly things! How many of them have tried their fortune in worldly affairs, have filled principal or subordinate posts, in parliament, at court, in the ministry, or in an embassy, have taken an active part in internal disorders and changes of constitutions and government, only to experience, if not in their own case, at any rate in that of friends and patrons, grievous rather than happy consequences! How many have been banished, imprisoned, or have suffered in their property!

That a perfectly suitable environment might not be wanting to all this melancholy, Ossian had drawn us by his charm even to the *Ultima Thule*, where on a gray and boundless heath, wandering among projecting, moss-grown tomb-stones, we watched the grass around us swaying in a ghostly wind, and the lowering, cloudy sky above us. It was not till the moon rose that the Caledonian night was turned to day; departed heroes, faded maidens, hovered round us, until at last we really thought we saw the spirit of Loda in all its fearful reality.

In such an atmosphere, with such surrounding influences, with tastes and studies of this kind, tortured by unsatisfied passions, with no outward inducements to important activities, with the sole prospect of persisting in a dull, spiritless, commonplace life, we became—in gloomy wantonness—attached to the idea, that we could at all events quit life at pleasure, when we could bear it no longer, and found in this a miserable stay against the insults and ennui of our daily existence. This feeling was so general, that *Werther* produced its great effect precisely because it struck a corresponding chord in every heart, presenting in clear and concrete form a picture of the inner workings of a morbid youthful delusion. How accurately the English understood this form of wretchedness is shown by the few significant lines, written before *Werther* appeared—

"To griefs congenial prone,
More wounds than nature gave he knew,
While misery's form his fancy drew
In dark ideal hues and horrors not its own."

Suicide is an incident in human life which, however much disputed and discussed, demands the sympathy of every man, and in every age must be dealt with anew. Montesquieu grants his heroes and great men the right of killing themselves as they think fit, since he says that it must be free to every one to close the fifth act of his tragedy when he pleases. But here it is not a question of those who have led an active and distinguished life, who have sacrificed their days for a great empire, or for the cause of freedom, and cannot be blamed if they hope to pursue in another world the idea which inspires them, as soon as this idea has vanished from the earth. We are here concerned with those whose life is embittered in the most peaceful circumstances by want of action and by the exaggerated demands they make upon themselves. Since I myself was in this predicament, and best know the pain I suffered in it, and the exertion it cost me to free myself from it, I will not try to hide the reflections which I then made, with much deliberation, on the various kinds of death a man might choose.

There is something so unnatural in the attempt made by any man to tear himself from himself, and not only to injure, but to destroy himself, that he generally has recourse to mechanical devices for carrying out his design. When Ajax falls upon his sword, it is the weight of his body which renders him this last service. When the warrior exacts an oath of his shieldbearer not to let him fall into the hands of the enemy, it is still an external force which he secures, only a moral instead of a physical one. Women seek to cool their despair in water, and, to take the extreme instance of such mechanical aids, fire-arms ensure swift action with the least exertion. Hanging is repellent, because it is an ignoble death. It is more likely to occur in England, because there, from youth up, it is common to see many hanged without the punishment being exactly dishonorable. By poison, by opening the veins, the aim is to leave life slowly; and that most refined, rapid, and painless death by the sting of an adder, was worthy of

a queen, who had passed her life in splendors and delights. But all these are external aids, enemies with which man forms an alliance against himself.

When I came to consider all these means, and to follow them out in history, I found that amongst all those who killed themselves, no one perpetrated the deed with such grandeur or freedom of soul, as the Emperor Otho. This man, defeated as a general, but by no means reduced to extremities, resolved to quit the world for the benefit of the empire, which, in a sense, already belonged to him, and for the sake of sparing many thousand lives. He has a cheerful supper with his friends, and the next morning it is found that he has stabbed himself to the heart with his dagger. This singular deed seemed to me worthy of imitation; and I was convinced that no one who could not in this imitate Otho, had a right to take his own life. By this conviction, I freed myself not only from the intention but also from the whim of suicide, which in those glorious times of peace had managed to creep in amongst an indolent youth. Among a considerable collection of weapons, I possessed a handsome, well-polished dagger. This I laid every night by my bed, and before I extinguished the candle, I tried whether I could succeed in plunging the sharp point a couple of inches deep into my breast. Since I never could succeed, I at last laughed myself out of the notion, threw off all hypochondriacal fancies, and resolved to live. But to be able to do this with serenity, I was obliged to translate into literary form and to clothe in words all that I had felt, thought, and fancied on this important point. With this object in view I collected the scattered elements which had been at work in me the last few years; I called back to mind the cases which had most afflicted and tormented me; but failed in attaining any definite conception: I lacked an event, a plot in which to embody them.

Suddenly I heard the news of the suicide of a friend whom we called Jerusalem; and, on the heels of the general rumor, came the most accurate and circumstantial description of the whole occurrence: on the instant the plan of *Werther* was formed, and the whole drew together, and became a solid mass, just as water in a vessel, which is upon the point of freezing, is converted into hard ice by the most gentle shake.

I was all the more anxious to hold fast this singular prize, to realize and carry out in all its parts a work of such important and varied contents, as I had once more become involved in a painful situation, which left me even less hope than any former one, and foreboded nothing but disappointment, if not ill-feeling.

It is always a misfortune to enter upon new relationships to which one has not been inured; we are often against our will lured into a false sympathy, the incompleteness of such positions troubles us, and yet we see no means either of completing or of renouncing them.

Frau von La Roche had married her eldest daughter at Frankfort, and often came to visit her, but could not reconcile herself to the position which she herself had chosen. Instead of endeavoring either to feel at home in it or else to make some change in it, she indulged in such lamentations, as forced one to think that her daughter was unhappy; although, as she wanted for nothing, and her husband denied her nothing, it was difficult to see exactly in what her unhappiness consisted. In the meanwhile I was well received in the house, and came into contact with the whole circle, consisting of those who had either contributed to bring about the marriage, or else hoped it would result in the happiness of both. The Dean of St. Leonard's, Dumeitz, became communicative and at last friendly with me. He was the first Catholic clergyman with whom I had come into close contact, and thanks to his clear-sightedness, I was able to gain from him pleasurable and satisfactory explanations of the faith, usages, and external and internal workings of this oldest of churches. I have a distinct memory too of an elegant, though middle-aged lady, named Servières. I formed the acquaintance of the Alessina-Schweizer, and other families, came into friendly relations with the sons, which lasted for some time, and so all at once found myself on intimate terms with a circle of strangers, in whose occupations, pleasures, and even religious exercises I was induced, nay, compelled to take part. My former relations to the young wife, which, properly speaking, were only those of a brother to a sister, continued after marriage; we were of corresponding ages; I was the only one in the whole circle in whom she heard

an echo of those intellectual tones to which she had been accustomed from her youth. We lived on together in a child-like confidence, and although there was no note of passion in our intercourse, it was still painful enough, because she too could not reconcile herself to her new circumstances, and, although richly endowed with fortune's gifts, saw herself transplanted from the pleasant valley of Ehrenbreitstein and a happy childhood to the gloomy surroundings of a mercantile house, and forced to act as mother to several step-children. So I found myself hemmed in amid new family relations, without any real share or participation in their life. As long as they were happy with one another, all went on smoothly enough; but most of the parties concerned turned to me in cases of vexation, and my lively sympathy generally did more harm than good. This situation soon became insupportable; all the disgust of life which usually springs from such unsatisfactory relationships, seemed to weigh on me with double and threefold weight, and a new and powerful resolution was once more needed to free me from it.

Jerusalem's death, which was occasioned by his unhappy attachment to the wife of a friend, shook me out of my dream, and I not only saw visibly before me what had befallen both him and me, but something similar which happened to me at the time stirred me too to passionate emotion, and hence I was naturally led to breathe into the work I had in hand all that warmth which makes no distinction between the imaginary and the actual. I completely isolated myself, prohibited the visits of my friends, and put aside all interests that did not immediately bear on the subject of my work. On the other hand, I gathered together everything that had any bearing on my design, going over the more recent events of my life of which I had as yet made no practical use. It was under such circumstances, and after such long and secret preparation that I wrote *Werther* in four weeks, with no previous written scheme either of the whole or of individual parts.

The manuscript, now finished, lay before me in a rough draft, with few corrections and alterations. It was made up into a book at once, for the binding is to a written work of much the same use as the frame is to a picture; it is much

easier to see whether there is really anything in it. I had written the little volume, almost unconsciously, like a somnambulist, and was myself astonished at it when I went through it, in order to alter and improve it. Thinking, however, that after some time, when I could look at the work from a certain distance, many possible improvements might occur to me, I gave it to my younger friends to read, and the effect produced on them was all the greater, as, contrary to my usual custom, I had told no one of it, nor revealed my plan beforehand. Yet here again it was the subject-matter which really produced the effect, and in this respect they were in a frame of mind precisely the reverse of my own; for by this composition, more than by any other, I had freed myself from that stormy element, in which, by my own fault and that of others, by a mode of life at once designed and accidental, of set purpose and by heedless precipitation, by obstinacy and pliability, I had been so violently tossed to and fro. I felt as if I had made a general confession, and was once more free and happy, and justified in beginning a new life.

The old recipe had this time done me excellent service. But while I myself felt eased and enlightened by having turned fact into fiction, my friends were demoralized by my work, for they thought that fiction should be turned into fact, that the hero ought to be imitated, and that the least one could do was to shoot oneself. The effect produced upon a few afterwards extended to the general public, and this little book, which had been so beneficial to me, was decried as extremely injurious.

But all the evils and misery it is supposed to have caused were nearly prevented by an accident, for soon after its production it ran the risk of being destroyed. This is what happened:—Merck had recently returned from St. Petersburg; I had had very little talk with him, because he was always busy, and only gave him a very general idea of the *Werther* which lay so near my heart. One day he called upon me, and as he did not seem very talkative, I asked him to listen to me. He sat down on the sofa, and I began to read the story letter by letter. After I had read for some time, without eliciting any sign of approval, I laid still more

stress upon the pathos,—but what were my feelings when, at a pause which I made, he struck a terrible blow at my hopes with a calm, "Yes! very pretty," and withdrew without any further remark. I was beside myself, for though I found pleasure in my works, I was at first quite unable to pass judgment on them. I now quite believed that I had made a mistake in subject, tone, and style—all of which were doubtful—and had produced something quite impossible. Had a fire been at hand, I should have burnt the work at once; but I again plucked up courage, and passed some painful days, until he at last assured me in confidence, that at that moment he had been in the most frightful position possible to any man. He had, therefore, neither seen nor heard anything, and did not even know what the manuscript was about. In the meanwhile his trouble had been set right, as far as possible, and Merck, when his energies were awake, was a man to bear any calamity, even the most stupendous; his humor returned, only it had grown even more bitter than before. He harshly condemned my design of re-writing *Werther,* and wished to see it printed just as it was. A fair copy was made, which did not long remain on my hands, for on the very day on which my sister was married to Georg Schlosser, and while the house was full of rejoicing at the event, a letter from Weygand, of Leipzig, arrived, in which he asked me for a manuscript. I looked on such a coincidence as a favorable omen. I sent off *Werther,* and was well satisfied to find that the remuneration I received for it was not entirely swallowed up by the debts I had been forced to contract on account of *Götz von Berlichingen.*

The effect this little book produced was enormous, chiefly because it exactly hit the temper of the times. For just as a little match will blow up a vast mine, so the force of the explosion which followed my publication was due to the fact that the youth of our generation had already undermined itself; and the shock was so great, because all extravagant demands, unsatisfied passions, and imaginary wrongs, found in it a violent and sudden vent. It cannot be expected of the public that it should receive a work of art in an artistic spirit. As a matter of fact, it was only the subject, the material, that was considered, as I had already found to be the case

among my own friends; while at the same time the old prejudice appeared, that the dignity of a printed book required it to have a moral aim. But a true picture of life has none. It neither approves nor censures, but develops feelings and actions in their natural consequences, and thereby enlightens and instructs.

### FOURTEENTH BOOK

ALONGSIDE the new movement which was spreading among the public, there arose another of greater importance perhaps to the author, as it took place in his immediate circle.

His early friends who had read in manuscript those literary works which were now creating so much sensation, looked upon them consequently almost as their own, and gloried in a success which they had been bold enough to predict. Their number was increased by new adherents, especially by such as felt conscious of creative power, or were eager to evoke it and cultivate it in themselves.

It was not long before I made the acquaintance of LAVATER. He had been much struck by passages from my "Letter of a Pastor to his Colleague," for much of it perfectly coincided with his own views. Thanks to his unwearying activity we were soon engaged in a lively correspondence. At the time it commenced he was making preparations for his larger work on Physiognomy,—the introduction to which had already been laid before the public. He entreated every one to send him drawings and silhouettes, and especially representations of Christ; and, although I could do little for him in this way, he nevertheless insisted on my sending him a sketch of the Savior such as I imagined him. Such impossible demands gave rise to jests of many kinds, for I had no other way of defending myself against his eccentricities than by bringing my own into play.

The number of those who had no faith in Physiognomy, or, at least, regarded it as uncertain and deceptive, was very large; and several who were not unfriendly to Lavater felt an irresistible longing to put him to the test, and, if possible, play a trick upon him. He had ordered of a respectable painter in Frankfort the profiles of several well known persons. Lavater's agent ventured upon the jest of sending

Bahrdt's portrait and passing it off as mine, which soon brought back a merry but thundering epistle, full of expletives of all sorts and asseverations that this was not my picture,—together with everything else that Lavater would naturally find to say on such an occasion in confirmation of the doctrine of Physiognomy. He was better satisfied with my true likeness, which was afterwards sent, but even here the antagonism into which he constantly fell both with painters and their subjects was very evident. The former could never be exact or faithful enough for him; the latter, whatever excellences they might have, always fell too far short of the ideal he entertained of men and humanity to prevent his being somewhat repelled by the special traits which constitute the personality of the individual.

The conception of humanity which he had evolved out of his own consciousness and nature, was so completely at one with the vivid conception of Christ which filled his heart, that it was impossible for him to understand how a man could live and breathe and yet not be a Christian. My own relation to the Christian religion was a matter of thought and feeling, and I had not the slightest conception of that physical affinity to which Lavater inclined. I was, therefore, vexed by the importunity, with which a man of so much heart and intellect attacked me, as well as Mendelssohn and others, maintaining that we must either become Christians with him, Christians of his sort, or else must bring him over to our own way of thinking, and convince him of those same truths in which we had found rest. This demand, so directly opposed to that liberal, humanitarian spirit, to which I was tending more and more, had no good effect on me. All unsuccessful attempts at conversion leave him who has been selected for a proselyte stubborn and obdurate, and this was especially the case with me when Lavater at last pronounced the harsh alternative—"Either Christian or Atheist!" I thereupon declared that if he would not leave me my own Christianity as I had hitherto cherished it, I was quite ready to decide for Atheism, particularly as I saw that nobody knew precisely what was meant by either.

This correspondence, vehement though it was, did not disturb the good terms we were on. Lavater had an incredible

amount of patience, pertinacity, and endurance; he was confident in his theory, and determined to propagate his convictions in the world; he was willing to effect by waiting and by gentle means what he could not accomplish by force. In short, he belonged to the few fortunate men whose calling perfectly harmonizes with their inner vocation, and whose training has proceeded uninterruptedly from their early to their later life, thus giving a natural development to their faculties. Born with the most delicate moral susceptibilities, he had chosen the clerical profession. He received the usual education, and displayed considerable ability, but showed no inclination to pursue his studies to the extent of real scholarship. For he too, though born so long before us, had, like ourselves, been caught by the spirit of Liberty and Nature which was characteristic of the time, and which whispered flatteringly in every ear, "You have possibilities and latent powers enough within yourself, without much outward aid; all depends upon their proper cultivation."

Our first meeting was a cordial one; we embraced in the most friendly way, and I found him just what I expected from the many portraits of him I had seen. I saw before me, in full life and activity, an individual of unique distinction, whose like the world has not seen and will not see again. Lavater, on the contrary, betrayed at once by some singular ejaculations, that I was not what he had expected. Thereupon, I assured him, with that realistic spirit which was natural to me and had been increased by cultivation, that since God and nature had been pleased to make me in that fashion we must rest content with it. The most important of the points on which we had been least able to agree in our letters, became at once subjects of conversation, but we had not time to discuss them thoroughly, while something happened to me that I had never before experienced.

For our part whenever we wished to speak of serious matters touching the soul or heart, we were wont to withdraw from the crowd, and even from all society, because among so many modes of thought, and different degrees of culture, it is difficult to be understood even by the few. But it was not so with Lavater, he liked to extend his influence as far as possible, and was never at ease except in a crowd, where

he could find scope for his wonderful talent for instruction and entertainment, based on his great knowledge of physiognomy. He had the power of discriminating persons and minds, which enabled him to understand at once the mental state of all around him. And whenever his penetration was met by sincere confession, or true-hearted inquiry, he was able, from the abundance of his internal and external experience, to satisfy every one with an appropriate answer. The deep tenderness of his look, the marked sweetness of his mouth, and even the honest Swiss accent which made itself heard through his High German, besides many other of his distinguishing features, immediately placed all whom he addressed entirely at their ease. Even the slight stoop in his carriage, and slightly hollow chest, contributed not a little to counterbalance in the eyes of the remainder of the company the weight of his commanding presence. Towards presumption and arrogance he could behave with tactful self-possession, for while seeming to yield he would suddenly bring forward some great and noble view, which could never have crossed the mind of his narrow-minded opponent, holding it before him like some great diamond shield, yet at the same time so skillfully moderating the light which flowed from it that such men felt themselves instructed and convinced,—so long at least as they were in his presence. Perhaps with many the impression continued to operate long afterwards, for even conceited men may be good at heart; all that is necessary is to soften by gentle influences the hard shell which holds the fruitful kernel.

What caused him the greatest pain was the presence of persons whose outward ugliness must irrevocably stamp them as decided enemies of his theory of the significance of form. These usually displayed a considerable amount of common sense, and even superior gifts and talents, in vehement hostility and paltry attacks upon a doctrine which appeared offensive to their self-love; for it was not easy to find any one so magnanimous as Socrates, who interpreted his faun-like exterior as a tribute to his acquired morality. To Lavater the hardness, the obduracy of such antagonists was horrible, and his opposition to them often passionate; just as the smelt-

ing fire must attack the resisting ore as troublesome and hostile. My intercourse with Lavater proved of very great moment and profit, for his pressing incitements to action set my calm, artistic, contemplative nature in motion, not, however, to any immediate advantage, because for the moment he only increased the distraction of mind which had already laid hold of me. Still, so many subjects were discussed between us, as to give rise to the most earnest desire on my part to prolong our intercourse. Accordingly I determined to accompany him if he went to Ems, when I hoped that, shut up in the carriage and cut off from the world, we might freely treat of those subjects which lay nearest to both our hearts.

For this reason I was glad to leave Lavater to the company of all those who looked to be edified by him and with him, and was fully compensated for this deprivation by the journey we took together to Ems. We were favored by lovely summer weather. Lavater was gay and altogether delightful. For in spite of his religious and moral turn of mind, he was by no means of an anxious disposition, but responded readily when outward events moved those around him to be gay and cheerful. He was sympathetic, clever, witty, and liked the same qualities in others, provided that they were kept within the bounds which his delicate sense of propriety prescribed. If any one ventured to go beyond them he would clap him on the back, and by a hearty *"Bisch guet!"* ("Be good") call the rash man back to good behavior. From this journey I derived both instruction and inspiration, of a kind, however, which contributed more to my knowledge of his character than to the government and development of my own. At Ems I saw him surrounded immediately by men of all sorts and conditions, and went back to Frankfort, because my trifling concerns were in such a state that I could scarcely afford to be absent from them.

But I was not destined to find rest and quiet again so speedily. Basedow now appeared to attract and influence me on another side. It would be scarcely possible to find a more decided contrast than that presented by these two men. A single glance at Basedow revealed the difference.

Lavater's features lay open to the observer; Basedow's, on the contrary, were crowded together, and drawn inward as it were. Lavater's eyes, beneath heavy eyelids, spoke of a frank and pious nature; Basedow's, deep-set, small, black, keen, gleamed from under bristling brows, while, on the contrary, Lavater's forehead displayed two arches of the softest brown hair. Basedow's strong, harsh voice, quick, sharp expressions, a certain sarcastic laugh, his habit of rapidly changing the conversation, and his other peculiarities, were the exact opposite of the qualities and demeanor by which Lavater had been wont to spoil us. Basedow too was much sought after in Frankfort, and his great talents were admired, but he was not the man either to edify souls or to lead them. His sole aim was to improve the cultivation of the wide field he had marked out for himself, so that humanity might afterwards, in taking up its dwelling there, find greater comfort and more natural liberty; but his hasty pursuit of this end was all too ruthless.

I could not altogether acquiesce in his plans or even get a clear understanding of his views. I was of course pleased with his desire to make all instruction living and natural; that the dead languages should be practiced on subjects of living interest, appeared to me a laudable ambition, and I gladly acknowledged all that side of his project that tended to promote activity and a fresher view of life. But what displeased me was that in his elementary treatise the illustrations were even more distracting in their arrangement than the subjects they treated of. For in the actual world only compatible things are brought together, and for that reason, in spite of all variety and apparent confusion, the world still preserves a certain regularity in all its parts. Basedow's elementary treatise, on the contrary, throws it into utter confusion, inasmuch as things which in the world would never appear combined, are here classed together for the sake of the association of ideas; and consequently, the book lacks even those palpable methodical advantages which we must acknowledge in the similar works of Amos Comenius.

But Basedow's conduct was far stranger and more incomprehensible than his doctrine. The purpose of his journey was, by personal influence to interest the public in his philan-

thropic enterprise, and, indeed, to open not only hearts but purses. He had the gift of speaking grandly and convincingly of his scheme, and every one was ready to concede what he asserted. But he succeeded in a most inexplicable way in hurting the feelings of the very men whose assistance he wished to gain; what is worse, he outraged them unnecessarily, through his inability to keep back his opinions and odd fancies on religious subjects. Here, too, Basedow was the very opposite of Lavater. While the latter received the Bible literally, and looked upon the whole of its contents as being word for word binding, and applicable at the present day, the former was stirred by restless promptings to renovate everything, and to remodel both the doctrines and the ceremonies of the church in conformity with his own fantastic notions. But he was most pitiless and most imprudent in his attacks on those conceptions which are not immediately derived from the Bible, but from its interpretation;—all those expressions, technical philosophical terms, or concrete similes, by which Councils and Fathers of the church have sought to explain the inexpressible, or to confute heretical doctrine. With harsh and unwarrantable aggressiveness, and before all alike, he declared himself the sworn enemy of the Trinity, and would never desist from arguing against this universally accepted mystery. I, too, had to suffer a good deal from this kind of entertainment in our private conversations, and was compelled again and again to listen to his tirades on *Hypostasis, Ousia,* and *Prosopon.* To meet all these I had recourse to the weapons of paradox, and, soaring to yet wilder flights of opinion than his own, dared to oppose his rash assertions with something rasher still. This was a fresh stimulus to my mind, and as Basedow was much more extensively read, and had more skill in the fencing tricks of argument than a follower of nature like myself, I had always to exert myself in proportion to the importance of the points which were discussed between us.

Such a splendid opportunity for exercising, if not for enlightening my mind, could not be allowed to end too soon; so I prevailed on my father and friends to manage the most pressing part of my affairs, and set off again from Frankfort, this time in Basedow's company. But what a difference I

felt when I recalled the grace of mind and spirit which breathed from Lavater! Pure himself, he created around him an atmosphere of purity. At his side one felt simple and sensitive as a girl in the desire to avoid hurting his feelings. Basedow, on the contrary, altogether self-absorbed, paid little heed to his surroundings. His ceaseless smoking of wretched tobacco was in itself extremely disagreeable, especially as his pipe was no sooner out, than he produced a dirtily prepared kind of tinder, which easily took fire, but had a most horrid stench, and every time poisoned the air insufferably with the first whiffs. I called this preparation "The Basedovian Smell-fungus," (*Stinkschwamm*) and declared that it ought to be introduced into Natural History under this name. This amused him greatly, and to my disgust he minutely explained the hated preparation, taking a malicious pleasure in my aversion to it. It was one of the deep rooted, disagreeable peculiarities of this admirably gifted man that he was fond of teasing, and would go out of his way to goad the most innocent and unconcerned. He could never see any one at peace, but would provoke him in his hoarse voice, with a mocking gibe, or put him to confusion by an unexpected question, laughing bitterly when he had gained his end; yet he was pleased when the object of his jests was quick enough to turn and retort upon him.

## FIFTEENTH BOOK

The common fate of man, which all of us have to bear, must weigh most heavily on those whose intellectual powers expand early and rapidly. We may grow up under the protection of parents and relatives; we may lean for a while upon our brothers and sisters and friends, be supported by acquaintances, and made happy by those we love, but in the end a man is always driven back upon himself, and it seems as if the Deity had assumed such an attitude towards men as not always to be able to respond to their reverence, trust, and love, at least not in the precise moment of need. Early enough, and by many a hard lesson, had I learned that at the most urgent crises the call to us is, "Physician, heal thyself;" and how often had I not been compelled to sigh in my pain, "I tread the wine-press alone!" So now, while I

was looking about for the means of establishing my independence, I felt that the surest basis on which to build was my own creative talent. For many years I had never known it to fail me for a moment. What, waking, I had seen by day, often shaped itself into regular dreams at night, and when I opened my eyes there was present in my mind either a wonderful new conception or an old one partially worked out. Usually, my time for writing was early in the morning; but also in the evening, or far into the night, when wine and social intercourse had raised my spirits, I was ready for any topic that might be suggested; only let a subject at all characteristic be offered, and I was at once ready and prepared. While, then, I reflected upon this natural gift, and found that it belonged to me as my own, and could neither be fostered nor hindered by anything external, I liked in thought to base my whole existence upon it. This conception soon assumed a distinct form; the old mythological image of Prometheus occurred to me, who, apart from the gods, peopled a world from his own workshop. I felt clearly, that the necessary condition for the production of a work of importance is isolation. My productions which had met with so much applause were children of solitude, and since my relation to the world had become wider, I had lacked neither the power nor pleasure of inventing, but the execution halted, because neither in prose nor in verse had I, properly speaking, a style, and consequently, with every new work, I had to begin at the beginning over again and try experiments. As in so doing I had to decline and even to exclude the aid of men, so, after the fashion of Prometheus, I separated myself from the gods also, and this was the more inevitable as with my character and mode of thinking one phase of feeling always swallowed up and excluded all others.

At this epoch, I was sitting one evening, engaged in this way, with a shaded light in my chamber, which at least gave it the air of an artist's studio, while the walls, with half-finished works pinned and hung on them, produced an impression of great industry, when there entered a slight, well-built man, whom, at first, in the twilight, I took for Fritz Jacobi, but soon, discovering my mistake, greeted as a stranger. In his free and well-bred carriage a certain military

bearing was unmistakable. He announced himself by the name of von Knebel, and from a brief introduction I gathered that he was in the Prussian service, and that during a long residence in Berlin and Potsdam he had actively cultivated the acquaintance of the literary men at those places, and of German literature in general. He had attached himself particularly to Ramler, and had adopted his mode of reciting poems. He was also familiar with all that Götz had written, who, at that time, had not yet made a name among the Germans. Through his exertions the *Mädcheninsel* (Isle of Maidens) of this poet had been printed at Potsdam, and had actually come into the hands of the King, who was said to have expressed a favorable opinion of it.

We had scarcely talked over these subjects of general interest in German literature, before I learned, to my great satisfaction, that at present he held an appointment in Weimar, his duty being to attend Prince Constantine. Of the state of things there I had already heard much that was favorable; for several strangers, who had come from Weimar, assured us that the Duchess Amalia had gathered round her the ablest men to assist in the education of the princes her sons; that the University of Jena, through its distinguished teachers, had also contributed to this excellent purpose; and that the arts were not only protected by this princess, but were practiced by her with great diligence and zeal. We also heard that Wieland was in especial favor; also that the *Deutscher Merkur,* in which the works of so many scholars in other places appeared, contributed not a little to the fame of the city in which it was published. There also was one of the best theaters in Germany, made famous by its actors, as well as by the authors who wrote for it. These noble beginnings and possibilities seemed, however, to have received a sudden check, and to be threatened with a long interruption, in consequence of the terrible conflagration of the castle, which had taken place in the May of that year. But the confidence in the Hereditary Prince was so great that every one was convinced that not only would the damage be repaired, but that, in spite of it, every other hope would be splendidly fulfilled. As I inquired after these persons and matters, as if I were an old acquaintance, and

expressed a wish to become more intimately acquainted with the life at Weimar, my visitor replied, in the most friendly manner possible, that nothing was easier, since the Hereditary Prince, with his brother, the Prince Constantine, had just arrived in Frankfort, and desired to see and know me. I at once expressed the greatest willingness to wait upon them, and my new friend told me that I must not delay, as their stay would not be long. In order to equip myself for the visit, I took von Knebel to my father and mother, who were greatly surprised at his arrival and the message he bore, and conversed with him with great satisfaction. I then proceeded with him to the young princes, who received me in a very easy and friendly manner; Count Görtz, also, the tutor of the Hereditary Prince, appeared pleased to see me.

In the course of our conversation, we discussed many points with regard to the difference between the States of Upper and Lower Saxony; not only their natural productions, it was observed, but also their manners, laws, and customs had differed from the earliest times, and, according to the form of religion and government, had been modified now in this way, now in that. We endeavored to obtain a clearer view of the differences between the two regions, and in this attempt it soon appeared how useful it was to have a good model, which, if regard were not had to its individual peculiarities, but to the general method on which it was based, might be applied to the most widely differing cases, and thereby prove highly serviceable in helping us to form a correct judgment.

This conversation, which was continued at the dinner-table, created a better impression in my favor than I perhaps deserved. For instead of making such works as I might have produced myself the subjects of discussion; instead of demanding undivided attention for the drama or romance, I appeared, while discussing Möser's book, to prefer those writers whose talents proceeded from active life, and were directed to its immediate service, whereas works essentially poetical, which rose above moral and material interests, could only be of use indirectly and incidentally. These discussions went on like the stories of the Arabian Nights; one important topic was involved in or succeeded another; many themes were only touched upon without our being able to follow them

up, and accordingly, as the stay of the young princes in Frankfort was necessarily short, they made me promise to follow them to Mainz and spend a few days with them there. I gave this promise gladly enough, and hastened home to impart the agreeable intelligence to my parents.

My father, however, could not by any means be brought to approve of it. In accordance with his sentiments as a citizen of the empire, he had always kept aloof from the great, and although constantly coming in contact with the *chargés d'affaires* of the neighboring princes, he had nevertheless avoided all personal relations with them. In fact, courts were among the things about which he was accustomed to joke. He was indeed rather pleased if any one opposed his opinions on this head; only he was not satisfied unless his opponent maintained his side with wit and intelligence. If we allowed the truth of his "*Procul a Jove procul a fulmine,*" but added, that with lightning the question was not so much whence it came as whither it went, he would quote the old proverb, "It is not good to eat cherries with great lords." When we replied that it was yet worse to eat with greedy people out of one basket, he would not deny the truth of this; only he was sure to have another proverb ready with which to put us to confusion.

But all these rejoinders could not move my father from his opinions. He was in the habit of reserving his strongest argument for the close of the discussion. This consisted of a minute description of Voltaire's adventure with Frederick the Second. He told us how the unbounded favor, familiarity and mutual obligations were suddenly canceled and forgotten; how we had lived to see such a comedy as the arrest of that extraordinary poet and writer by the Frankfort civic guard, on the accusation of the Resident Freytag, and the warrant of the Burgomaster Fichard, and his confinement for some time in the tavern of the Rose, in the Zeil. To this we might have answered in many ways,—among others, that Voltaire himself was not free from blame,—but from filial respect we always yielded the point.

On the present occasion, when these things and others like them were alluded to, I hardly knew how to demean myself, for he warned me explicitly, maintaining that the

invitation was given only to entice me into a trap, in order to take vengeance on me for my mischievous treatment of the favored Wieland. Fully as I was convinced of the contrary, and though I saw but too plainly that a preconceived opinion, due to hypochondriac fancies, actuated my worthy father, yet I was unwilling to act in direct opposition to his convictions, and at the same time I could not find any excuse for failing to keep my promise, without appearing ungrateful and discourteous. Unfortunately our friend Fräulein von Klettenberg, to whose advice we usually resorted in such cases, was confined to her bed. In her and my mother I had two invaluable counselors. I called them Word and Deed; for when the former turned her serene or rather blissful glance to earthly things, the perplexity which had troubled us children of earth, at once grew plain before her, and she could almost always point out the right way, because she looked upon the labyrinth from above, and was not herself entangled in it. When a decision was once made, the readiness and energy of my mother could be relied on. While the former had Sight for her aid, the latter had Faith, and as she maintained her serenity in all cases, she was never without the means of accomplishing what she purposed or desired. Accordingly she was now dispatched to our sick friend to obtain her opinion, and when this turned out in my favor, she was entreated to gain the consent of my father, who yielded unwillingly, and against his judgment.

It was in a very cold season of the year that I arrived at the appointed hour in Mainz. My reception by the young princes and by their attendants was no less friendly than the invitation. The discussions in Frankfort were recalled and resumed at the point where they had been broken off. When the conversation turned upon recent German literature and its audacious flights, it was perfectly natural that my famous piece, *"Götter, Helden, und Wieland"* (Gods, Heroes, and Wieland), should be referred to, and I noticed at once with satisfaction that they treated the matter lightly and good-humoredly. Being called on to give the real history of this *jeu d'esprit,* which had excited so great attention, I could not avoid confessing, first of all, that as true sons of the Upper Rhine, we knew no bounds either in our

likes or dislikes. With us, reverence for Shakespeare was carried to adoration. But Wieland, with his characteristic propensity to destroy his own and his readers' interest, and damp their enthusiasm, had, in the notes to his translation, found frequent fault with the great author, and in such a way as to vex us exceedingly, and to diminish in our eyes the value of the work. We saw that Wieland, whom we had so highly revered as a poet, and who, as a translator, had rendered such great service, was, as a critic, capricious, one-sided, and unjust. Besides this, he had deliberately spoken against our idols, the Greeks, and this increased our hostility yet more.

In this way I narrated to my new patrons, with perfect candor, the innocent origin of the piece, as well as I knew it myself, and to convince them that it contained no personalities, nor any ulterior motive, I also explained with what gayety and recklessness we were accustomed to banter and ridicule each other among ourselves. With this explanation I saw that they were quite satisfied. They almost admired the great fear we had lest any one of us should rest upon his laurels. They compared such a society to those Buccaneers who were afraid of becoming effeminate the first moment of repose, and whose leader, when there were no enemies to fight, and no plunder to seize, used to let off a pistol under the mess-table, so that even in peace they might be acquainted with wounds and suffering. After which discussion I was at last induced to write Wieland a friendly letter. I gladly availed myself of the opportunity, as, in the *Merkur*, he had referred in most generous terms to this piece of youthful folly, and, as was almost always his custom in literary feuds, had closed the affair in the most skillful manner.

The few days of my stay at Mainz passed very pleasantly; for when my new patrons were abroad paying visits and attending banquets, I remained with their suite, drew the portraits of several, or went skating, for which the frozen moats of the fortification afforded excellent opportunity. I returned home full of the kindness I had met with, and, as I entered the house, was on the point of unburdening my heart by a minute account of it; but I saw only troubled faces, and soon learned that our friend Fräulein von Klettenberg was no

more. At this I was greatly concerned, because, in my present circumstances, I needed her more than ever. They told me for my consolation, that a pious death had crowned her happy life, and that her cheerful faith had remained undisturbed to the end. But there was also another obstacle which prevented my talking freely about my visit. My father, instead of rejoicing at the fortunate issue of this little adventure, persisted in his opinion, and maintained that it was nothing but dissimulation on their side, and that perhaps they had something all the worse in store for me.

## SIXTEENTH BOOK

What people commonly say of misfortunes, that they never come singly, may be said with almost as much truth of good fortune too, and, indeed, of other circumstances which often gather round us with one accord; whether it be by a kind of fatality, or whether it be that man has the power of attracting to himself a series of related things.

At any rate, my present experience showed me everything conspiring together to produce an outward and an inward peace. The former came to me as I patiently awaited the result of what others were meditating and designing for me; the latter, however, I had to attain for myself by renewing my studies.

It was long since I had thought of Spinoza, and now I was driven to him by an attack made upon him. In our library I came across a little volume whose author railed violently against this original thinker; and to produce a more certain effect, had inserted as frontispiece a portrait of Spinoza himself, with the inscription: *Signum reprobationis in vultu gerens,* "bearing on his face the stamp of reprobation." There was no gainsaying this, indeed, so long as one looked at the portrait; for the engraving was wretchedly bad, and a perfect caricature: so that I could not help thinking of those adversaries who first of all misrepresent the object of their spite, and then assail this monster of their own creation.

This little book, however, made no impression upon me, since I never cared for controversial works, but always preferred to learn from the author himself what his thoughts

were, rather than to hear from another how he ought to have thought.

My confidence in Spinoza rested on the sense of serenity he wrought in me, and it only increased, when I found my worthy friends, the mystics, were accused of Spinozism, and learned that even Leibnitz himself could not escape the charge; and that Boerhaave, suspected of similar sentiments, had to abandon theology for medicine.

But let no one think that I would have subscribed to his writings, and assented to them *verbatim et literatim.* For I had long seen but too plainly that no man really understands another; that no one attaches the same idea to the same word that another does; that a conversation, a book, excites in different persons different trains of thought:—and the reader will trust the assertion of the author of *Faust* and *Werther,* that deeply versed as he was in such misunderstandings, he was never so presumptuous as to think that he could perfectly understand a man, who, as a disciple of Descartes, had risen, through mathematical and rabbinical studies, to the loftiest heights of thought; and whose name even to this day seems to mark the limit of all speculative efforts.

A witty Frenchman has said: "If a clever man has once attracted the attention of the public by any work of merit, every one does his best to prevent his ever doing the like again."

Nothing could be truer: let us suppose some work of worth and talent produced in the quiet seclusion of youth; applause is won, but independence is lost; the talents which had been concentrated on his work are distracted by the demands of those who think they can appropriate some fragment of his personality.

It was in this way that I received a great many invitations, or, rather, not exactly invitations: a friend, an acquaintance would propose, and often more than propose, to introduce me now here, now there.

The *quasi* stranger, now described as a bear on account of his frequent surly refusals, and then again, like Voltaire's Huron or Cumberland's West Indian, as a child of nature in spite of many talents, excited much curiosity, and in many

families negotiations were set on foot to secure acquaintance with him.

Among others, a friend one evening entreated me to go with him to a little concert to be given in the house of an eminent merchant of the reformed persuasion. It was already late; but yielding to my love of acting on the spur of the moment, I went with him, respectably dressed, as usual. We were shown into a room on the ground floor,—their spacious ordinary family sitting-room. There was a large company assembled, a piano stood in the middle of the room at which the only daughter of the house sat down immediately, and played with considerable facility and grace. I stood at the far end of the piano, that I might be near enough to watch her bearing and appearance; there was something childlike in her manner, and the movements she made in playing were unconstrained and easy.

When she had finished her sonata, she stepped towards my end of the piano; we merely bowed without entering into conversation, for a quartet had already been started. At the close of it, I drew somewhat nearer and made some polite compliment; telling her what pleasure it gave me that my first acquaintance with her should at the same time make me acquainted with her talent. She made some graceful reply and we both kept our places. I saw that she observed me closely, and that I was really standing for inspection; but I took it all in good part, since I had something charming to look at in my turn. Meanwhile, we were observing each other, and I will not deny that I was sensible of a sweet and gentle attraction. Social demands and the varied entertainment prevented any further approach that evening. But I must confess that I was anything but displeased, when, on taking leave, the mother gave me to understand that they hoped soon to see me again, while the daughter seemed not indisposed to join in the request. I did not fail to repeat my visits at suitable intervals, since I was sure of finding cheerful and intellectual conversation, which seemed free from all tendency to more passionate feelings.

In the meantime, having once thrown our house open to hospitality, its claims caused no small inconvenience both to my good parents and to myself. At any rate in my case it

in no wise aided my steadfast desire to catch sight of the ideal, to learn to know it, to advance it, and if possible, to create after its likeness. Men, I saw, in so far as they were good, were pious-minded, and in so far as they were practical, were unwise and often blundered. Their piety could not help me, and their mistakes only confused me.

SEVENTEENTH BOOK

In the history of my relations with Lili, I have to mention the many very pleasant hours I spent in her society, partly in the company of her mother, partly alone with her. On the strength of my writings, people gave me credit for knowledge of the human heart, as it was then called, and from this point of view our conversations invariably possessed ethical interest.

But how could we discuss our inner feelings without coming to mutual disclosures? So it was not long before, in a quiet hour, Lili told me the history of her youth. She had grown up in the enjoyment of all social advantages and worldly pleasures. She described to me her brothers, her relations, and all the circumstances of her life; only her mother remained in respectful obscurity.

Little weaknesses, too, were remembered; and among them she could not deny, that she had been made conscious of a certain power of attracting others, and, at the same time, of a certain tendency to drop them again. So in the course of our discussions we came at last to the important point, that she had exercised this power upon me, but had been punished for it, since she had been attracted by me also.

These confessions flowed from so pure and childlike a nature, that by them she made me entirely her own.

We were now necessary to each other, we had grown into the habit of seeing each other; but how many a day, how many an evening till far into the night, should I have had to deny myself her company, if I had not reconciled myself to seeing her in her own circle! This was a source of manifold pain to me.

My relation to her was that of one person to another—I looked upon her in her character of a beautiful, amiable, highly accomplished daughter; it was like my earlier attach-

ments, but was of a still higher kind. Of outward circumstances, however, of the inevitable constant mixing with society I had never thought. An irresistible longing possessed me; I could not be without her, nor she without me; but owing to her surroundings, and the interference of individual members of her circle, how many days were spoiled, how many hours wasted!

The history of pleasure parties which ended in displeasure; a dilatory brother, with whom I was to join the others, who would finish his business with the greatest leisureliness—whether from malice I do not know—and so spoiled the whole preconcerted plan; other appointments and failures to meet; impatience and disappointment—all these troubles, which, if set forth in greater detail in a romance, would certainly find sympathizing readers, I must here omit.

If we walked out early in the morning, we found ourselves in the freshest air, though not in real country. Imposing buildings, which at that time would have done honor to a city; gardens, spreading before us, laid out in level flower-beds and ornamental borders; an unimpeded view across the river to its opposite banks; often, even at an early hour, a busy traffic on the water of passing rafts, quickly moving market-boats and skiffs—all forming a living world, gliding gently past us, in harmony with love's tender feelings. Even the lonely rippling of the waves and the rustling of the reeds in a softly flowing stream sounded refreshing, and never failed to cast a tranquillizing spell over those who approached the spot. A clear summer sky overarched the whole, and most pleasant was it to renew a loved companionship morning after morning in the midst of such scenes!

Should such a mode of life seem too gay and easy, or too frivolous to the earnest reader, let him consider that between the incidents, here narrated consecutively to make the description complete, there intervened whole days and weeks of privation, other engagements and occupations, and even insupportable tedium.

Men and women were busily engaged in their spheres of duty. I, too, out of regard for the present and the future, did not neglect to fulfill all my obligations, and still found plenty of time to obey the dictates of genius and passion.

The earliest hours of the morning I devoted to poetry; the middle of the day to worldly business, which was carried on in an original way. My father, who was a thorough and indeed philosophical jurist, managed himself such business as the care of his own property, and a connection with valued friends involved; for although his character as Imperial Councilor did not allow him to practice, he acted the part of legal adviser to many friends, while the papers he prepared were signed by a regular advocate, who received a consideration for every such signature.

This activity of his had become greater rather than less by my association in it since my return, and it was easy to see that he thought more of my poetical gifts than of my practical capacity, and on that account made every effort to leave me time for my literary studies and productions. Sound and thorough, but slow of conception and execution, he would get up the case as a private barrister, and when we met to consult, he would state the case, and leave me to work it out, which I did with so much ease, that it caused him a father's purest joy, and once could not refrain from declaring, that, if I were not his own flesh and blood, he should envy me.

On account of my increasing circle of business, which, from love to her, I was anxious to establish and extend, my visits to her became more rare, and hence arose a somewhat painful predicament: it seemed as if I were neglecting and wasting the present for the sake of the future.

As my prospects were now gradually improving, I took them to be more promising than they really were, and I thought the more of coming to a speedy decision, since so public an intimacy could not go on much longer without causing embarrassment. And, as is usual in such cases, we did not expressly say so to one another; but the feeling of perfect mutual satisfaction, the full conviction that a separation was impossible, the confidence reposed by each in the other,—all this produced such a seriousness, that I, who had firmly resolved never again to become involved in a protracted connection of the kind, and who found myself, nevertheless, again in the trammels, without the certainty of a happy issue, was in truth beset with deep depression of

spirit, and in the endeavor to shake it off I plunged more and more into uninteresting worldly affairs, from which I could only hope to derive profit and satisfaction at the side of my beloved.

In this strange situation, such as many others, no doubt, have painfully experienced, there came to our aid a certain lady who was a friend of the family, and possessed an intimate knowledge of all the persons and circumstances involved. She was called Mademoiselle Delf; she with her elder sister managed a little business in Heidelberg, and on several occasions had owed much to the kindness of the chief banking-house in Frankfort. She had known and loved Lili from her youth; she was a person of character, grave and masculine in appearance, with an even, firm, rapid step. She had had peculiar reason to adapt herself to the world, and hence she understood it, in a certain sense at least. She could not be called intriguing; she was accustomed to watch developments for a long time, and to keep her conclusions to herself: but then she had the gift of seeing an opportunity, and if she found people wavering betwixt doubt and resolution, when everything depended upon decision, she would bring such force of character to bear on the situation, that she seldom failed to accomplish her purpose. Properly speaking she had no selfish ends; to have accomplished something, to have carried something through, especially to have brought about a marriage, was reward enough for her. She had long since comprehended our position, and, in repeated visits, had carefully observed the state of affairs, so that she had finally convinced herself that the attachment must be encouraged; that our plans, good in intention, but not prosecuted with sufficient energy and resolution, must be promoted, and this little romance brought to a close as speedily as possible.

For many years she had enjoyed the confidence of Lili's mother. Introduced by me to my parents, she had made herself agreeable to them; for in an Imperial City, brusqueness of manner like hers is seldom offensive, and backed by cleverness and tact, is even welcome. She was fully acquainted with our wishes and our hopes; her love of doing something made her see in them a call upon her good offices; in short she entered into treaty with our parents. How

she began it, how she removed the difficulties which must have stood in her way, I do not know; but she came to us one evening and brought the consent. "Take each other by the hand!" cried she, in her pathetic, commanding manner. I stood opposite to Lili and offered her my hand; she, not indeed hesitatingly, but still slowly, placed hers in it. After a long breath we fell into each other's arms with deep emotion.

It was a strange decree of overruling Providence, that in the course of my singular history, I should also have experienced the feelings of one who is betrothed.

I may venture to assert, that for a moral man it is the pleasantest of all recollections. It is delightful to recall those feelings, which are difficult to express and almost inexplicable. The previous state of things is entirely changed; things before absolutely antagonistic are now reconciled, the most inveterate differences adjusted; the promptings of nature, the warnings of reason, tyrannizing impulses, and the dictates of reason, which before kept up a perpetual strife within us, all enter into friendly unity, and at the festival, so universally celebrated with solemn rites, that which was forbidden is commanded, and that which was penal is raised to an inviolable duty.

The reader will learn with approval that from this time forward a change took place in me. If my beloved had hitherto been regarded by me as beautiful, graceful, and attractive, now her worth and excellence claimed my respect and consideration. She was as it were a double person: her grace and loveliness belonged to me,—that I felt as before; but the dignity of her character, her self-reliance, her absolute reliability, remained her own. I beheld it, I comprehended it, I delighted in it as a store of wealth, the interest of which I was to share as long as I lived.

There is depth and significance in the old remark: no one remains long on the summit. The consent of the parents on both sides, obtained in such a characteristic manner by Demoiselle Delf, was considered final, without comment and without further formality. For as soon as something ideal—and in truth a betrothal such as ours merits the name—is brought face to face with reality, then when all seems to be

settled, a critical time ensues. The outward world is utterly unmerciful, and rightly, for it must assert its authority once for all; the self-confidence of youthful passion is very great, but we see it only too often shattered upon the rocks of opposing realities. A young couple who enter upon married life, unprovided with sufficient means, cannot look forward to a life of honeymoon bliss, especially in these latter times; the world immediately presses upon them with uncompromising demands, which, if not satisfied, make the young couple appear ridiculous.

Of the insufficiency of the methods which I had seriously adopted for the attainment of my end, I could not have been aware beforehand, because they would have been adequate up to a certain point; but now that the realization of my hopes was drawing nearer, I saw that matters were not quite what they ought to be.

The illusion which passion finds so convenient was now exposed in all its inconsistency. My house, my domestic circumstances, had to be considered in all their details, in the light of sober common sense. It was true that the whole had been planned by my father with a view to a future daughter-in-law; but then what sort of a lady did he contemplate?

However this had not yet become clear to me, nor yet to her. But now when I tried to fancy myself bringing her to my home, somehow she did not seem to suit it exactly; just as when I went to her parties I had been obliged to change and re-change the style of my clothes for fear of appearing ridiculous by the side of those gay and fashionable worldlings. But no such change was possible in the domestic economy of a substantial burgher-house, rebuilt in accordance with an old-fashioned splendor which gave as it were a conservative character to the establishment.

Moreover, even after our parents' consent had been gained, it had not been possible to establish friendly relations or any intercourse between our respective families. Different religious opinions produced different habits; and if the amiable girl had wished to continue her former mode of life, she would have found neither opportunity nor space in our moderate-sized house.

If I had never thought of all this till now, it was because I had been encouraged by the opening of good prospects away from Frankfort, which promised a chance of obtaining some valuable appointment. An enterprising man can take root anywhere; ability and talent create confidence; every one thinks that a change of management is all that is needed. The importunity of youth finds favor, everything is thought possible to genius, whereas it can only do one particular thing.

The field of German intellectual and literary culture at this time presented the appearance of newly broken ground. Among business people there were far-sighted men, on the lookout for skillful cultivators and prudent managers to till the unturned soil. Even the respected and well established Free Masons' Lodge, with whose most distinguished members I had become acquainted through my intimacy with Lili, found a fitting means of bringing me into touch with them; but, from a feeling of independence, which afterwards appeared to me madness, I declined all closer connection with them, not perceiving that these men, though forming a society of their own in a special sense, might yet do much to further my own ends, so nearly related to theirs.

I return to more personal matters.

In such cities as Frankfort, men often fill several offices at once, such as residentships, and agencies, the number of which may by energy be developed indefinitely. An opportunity of this sort now presented itself to me, and at first sight it seemed both advantageous and honorable. It was assumed that I was fitted for the place; and I should certainly have succeeded, if it could have commanded the cooperation of the Chancery triad already described. Thereupon we suppress our doubts; we dwell only on what is favorable; by violent efforts we overcome all wavering; a false position is thus created, without the vehemence of our passion being in the least moderated.

In times of peace there is no more interesting reading for the multitude than the public papers, which furnish early information of the latest doings in the world. By so doing the quiet, comfortable citizen innocently develops a party spirit, which with our present limitations we neither can nor should get rid of. Every easy-going person thus feels an

interest resembling that which people take in a wager: we experience an unreal gain or loss, and, like a play-goer, feel a very lively, though imaginary sympathy in the good or evil fortune of others. This sympathy often seems arbitrary, but it rests on moral grounds. For now we give to praiseworthy designs the applause they deserve; and now, carried away by brilliant successes, we are drawn towards those whose plans we should otherwise have censured. Abundant instances were furnished by the times of which I speak.

Frederick the Second, confident of his power, seemed to hold in his hand the fate of Europe and the world; Catherine, a great woman, who had proved herself every way worthy of a throne, provided able and highly favored men with an ample sphere of action by extending the dominion of their Empress; and as this was done at the expense of the Turks, whose contempt for us we are apt to repay with interest, it did not seem a sacrifice of human life, when these infidels were slain by thousands. The burning of the fleet in the harbor of Tschesme caused universal rejoicings throughout the civilized world, and every one shared in the arrogance of victory, the extravagance of which can be gauged by the fact that a warship was actually blown up in the Roads of Leghorn to provide a model for an artistic study, so that a true picture of that great event might be preserved. Not long after this, a young northern king, likewise acting on his own authority, seized the reins of government. The aristocrats whom he overthrew were not lamented, for aristocracy finds no favor with the public, since it is its nature to work in silence, and it is secure in proportion as it escapes observation; and in this case the people thought all the better of the young king, since in order to counterbalance the power of the higher ranks, he was obliged to favor the lower classes, and to conciliate their good will.

The lively interest of the world was still more excited when a whole people prepared to effect their independence. The same drama on a smaller scale had already been watched with interest: Corsica had long been the point towards which all eyes were directed; Paoli, when he saw his patriotic designs frustrated, passed through Germany to England, and won all hearts. He was a handsome man, slight, fair, full of

grace and kindliness; I saw him in Bethmann's house, where he stopped a short time, and received with cheerful cordiality the curious visitors who thronged to see him. But now similar events were to be repeated in a remote quarter of the globe; we wished the Americans all success, and the names of Franklin and Washington began to shine in the firmament of politics and war. Much had been accomplished to improve the condition of humanity, and now in France, a new and benevolent sovereign evinced the good intention of limiting his own action to the removal of many abuses and to the pursuit of the noblest ends, while he introduced a regular and efficient system of administration, dispensed with all arbitrary power, and ruled by law and justice alone; hence the brightest hopes spread over the whole world, and confident youth promised itself and all contemporaries a fair, nay glorious future.

All these events, however, interested me only so far as society at large took an interest in them; I myself and my immediate circle did not concern ourselves with the news of the day; our object was to get to know man; we were content to let people in general go their own way.

The tranquillized condition of Germany, of which my native town had formed a part for more than a century, had remained intact in spite of many wars and convulsions. The existence of the most varied social grades, including as they did the highest as well as the lowest, the Emperor as well as the Jew, instead of separating the various members, seemed rather to unite them; and this condition of things was conducive to a feeling of contentment. Even when the sovereign princes were subordinated to the Emperor, their electoral right and the prerogatives which it carried with it, and which they asserted, made them in a real sense his equals. But now the independent princes had become closely linked to the highest rank of royalty, so that, in view of their important privileges, they considered themselves equal in rank with the highest, indeed in a certain sense superior to them, since the spiritual electoral princes had precedence before all others, and, as scions of the hierarchy, claimed an undisputed place of honor.

When we call to mind the extraordinary additional powers

which these ancient families further enjoyed with regard to chapter-houses, knightly orders, ecclesiastical associations, guilds and fraternities, it is not surprising that this numerous body of influential persons, who regarded themselves as a hierarchy of peers, passed untroubled days in well-ordered worldly activity, and without particular effort laid up for and bequeathed to their descendants a similar self-satisfaction. Nor was this class deficient in intellectual culture, for in the previous century the higher military and commercial education had made distinct advances: it had spread to the whole of aristocratic and diplomatic society, and, at the same time, had succeeded in awakening a general interest in literature and philosophy, and had given men a wide outlook, not altogether flattering to the existing state of things.

In Germany it had hardly occurred to any one as yet to look with envy on this vast privileged class, or to grudge it its obvious worldly advantages. The middle classes had quietly devoted themselves to commerce and the sciences, and by these pursuits, as well as by the practice of the mechanical arts, so closely related to them, had raised themselves to a position of importance which fully compensated their political inferiority; the free or partially free cities encouraged their activity, so that members of these classes were enabled to lead a life of peace and comfort.

## EIGHTEENTH BOOK

In a city like Frankfort, one is placed in a strange position; strangers continually meeting there tell of every region of the globe, and awaken a passion for travel. On many previous occasions I had shown readiness to seek other surroundings, and now at the very moment when it was important to find out whether I could live without Lili—when a painful restlessness unfitted me for all regular business, the proposition of the Stolbergs, that I should accompany them to Switzerland, was welcome. Encouraged by my father's approval, who looked with pleasure on the idea of my traveling in that direction, and advised me to cross over into Italy, if a suitable occasion should offer itself, my mind was quickly made up, and I soon had everything packed for the journey. With

vague intimations but without leave-taking, I parted from Lili; she had so grown into my heart, that I did not seem to be going from her.

In a few hours I found myself with my merry fellow-travelers in Darmstadt. At the court there we were still expected to behave with perfect propriety; here it was really Count Haugwitz who took the lead. He was the youngest of us all, well-built, of a refined, noble appearance, with gentle, kindly features, of an equable disposition, sympathetic, but with so much moderation, that, compared with the others, he appeared quite impassive. Consequently, he had to put up with all sorts of jibes and nicknames from them. This was all very well, so long as they believed that they might act like children of nature; but as soon as the occasion called for propriety, and we were again obliged, not unwillingly, to resume our proper characters, he would then manage to arrange and smooth over everything, so that we always came off with tolerable credit, if not with distinction.

I spent my time, meanwhile, with Merck, who in his Mephistophelian manner looked upon my intended journey with an evil eye, and described my companions, who had paid him a visit, with a relentless penetration. In his way he knew me thoroughly; my naïve and indomitable good nature was a grief to him; the everlasting letting things go their own way, the live and let live was his detestation. "It is a stupid plan," he said, "your going with these lads;" and then he would describe them aptly, but not altogether justly. Throughout there was a want of kindly feeling, and this made me think I could see further than he did, although I did not in fact do so, but only knew how to appreciate those sides of their character which lay outside his horizon.

"You will not stay long with them!" was the sum of his remarks. On this occasion I remember a remarkable saying of his, which he repeated to me at a later time, and which I often repeated to myself, and frequently found confirmed in life. "Your dim, but unswerving endeavor," said he, "is to give a poetic form to the real; others seek to give reality to the so-called poetic, to the imaginative, and of that nothing will ever come but stupid stuff." Whoever apprehends the immense difference between these two modes of procedure,

whoever insists and acts upon this conviction, has gained enlightenment on a thousand other things.

Unhappily, before our party left Darmstadt, an incident happened which tended to confirm beyond dispute Merck's opinion.

Among the follies of the time arising from the notion that people should endeavor to live in a state of nature, was the habit of bathing in cold water in the open air; and here, too, our friends, after conforming to necessary proprieties, could not resist this temptation. Darmstadt, lying in a sandy plain without running water, must have had some pond in its vicinity, of which I only heard in this connection. The friends, naturally hot and apt to make themselves yet hotter, sought refreshment in this pool; the sight of naked youths in bright sunshine was probably regarded as a singular one in this district. At any rate there was a scandal. Merck became more cutting in his inferences, and I must confess to having hastened our departure.

Even before we reached Mannheim, in spite of all the good and noble feelings we had in common, a certain dissonance in opinion and behavior became apparent. Leopold Stolberg declared passionately that he had been compelled to terminate an ardent love affair with a beautiful Englishwoman, and that it was on this account that he had undertaken such extensive travels. When he was sympathetically informed that another member of the company was no stranger to such feelings, he burst out with youthful exaggeration that his devotion, his sufferings, no less than the beauty and charm of his lady-love, were not to be equaled by anything in the world. When an attempt was made to pacify his vehemence by reasonable arguments, as became our good fellowship, the situation only became more strained, and Count Haugwitz as well as myself in the end saw good to drop the subject. Arrived at Mannheim, we established ourselves in comfortable rooms in a respectable inn. At dessert after our first dinner, at which the wine had been passed freely, Leopold called upon us to drink to the health of his Fair One, which we did with considerable noise. After we had drained our glasses, he exclaimed, "Such hallowed goblets shall never be drunk out of more; a second toast would be desecration; let us

therefore destroy these vessels!" and forthwith flung his wine-glass behind him against the wall. The rest of us followed his example, and I felt as if Merck plucked me by the collar.

However, young people preserve the childlike trait of bearing no malice against good comrades: their ingenuous attachment may receive an unpleasant shock, but it cannot be deeply wounded.

The glasses thus proclaimed sacred had considerably swelled our reckoning; however, we proceeded to Carlsruhe, gayly and lightheartedly, there to enter a new circle, with all the confidence of youth and its freedom from care. There we found Klopstock, who still maintained with dignity his ancient authority over disciples who held him in reverence. I also gladly did homage to him, so that when bidden to court with the others, I probably conducted myself tolerably well for a novice. One felt to some extent called upon to be natural and at the same time dignified.

The reigning Margrave, highly honored among the German Sovereigns as one of their senior princes, but more especially on account of his excellent aims as a ruler, was glad to converse about matters of political economy. The Margravine, actively interested in the arts and various useful branches of knowledge, endeavored to express her sympathy with us in graceful speeches; for which we were duly grateful, though when at home we could not refrain from making fun of her miserable paper-manufactory, and the favor she showed to the piratical bookseller Macklot.

The circumstance, however, of most importance for me, was, that the young Duke of Saxe-Weimar had arrived here to enter into a formal matrimonial engagement with his noble bride, the Princess Louisa of Hesse-Darmstadt; President von Moser had already arrived, in order to discuss this important contract with the court-tutor Count Görtz, and complete the agreement. My conversations with both royal personages were most friendly, and at the farewell audience, they both gave me repeated assurances that it would be pleasant to them to see me soon at Weimar.

In some private conversation Klopstock showed me so much kindness that I was led to use openness and candor with

him. I communicated to him the latest scenes of *Faust,* which he seemed to approve of; indeed, I afterwards heard that he had spoken of them to others with marked commendation, a thing not usual with him, and expressed a wish to see the conclusion of the piece.

Our former rudeness, sometimes called the demeanor of genius, was kept within bounds in Carlsruhe, with its dignified and almost sacred associations. I parted from my companions, as I had resolved to branch off from our route and go to Emmendingen, where my brother-in-law was high bailiff. I looked upon this visit to my sister as a real trial. I knew that her life was not a happy one, while neither she, nor her husband, nor their circumstances appeared to be to blame. Her character was peculiar and difficult to discuss; we will, however, endeavor to summarize here whatever is possible to say about her.

She was happy in possessing a fine figure, but not good features, which, though they clearly expressed goodness, intelligence, and sympathy, were nevertheless wanting in regularity and charm.

Added to this, a high and strongly arched forehead, thanks to the unpleasing fashion of combing the hair tightly back from the face, produced a somewhat unpleasant impression, although it bore the best testimony to her moral and intellectual qualities. I can fancy, that if, after the modern fashion, she had surrounded the upper part of her face with curls, and adorned her temples and cheeks with ringlets, she would have been more pleased with the reflection in her mirror and have had no fear of displeasing others any more than herself. Further, there was the misfortune that her skin was seldom clear, a defect which from her youth up, by some demoniacal fatality was sure to show itself on all festal occasions, such as concerts, balls, and other parties.

She had gradually overcome these drawbacks, and at the same time her other splendid qualities had developed more and more.

A firm character not easily controlled, a soul that sympathized and needed sympathy, a highly cultivated mind, fine acquirements and talents; some knowledge of languages and a ready pen—all these she possessed, so that if she had been

favored with outward charms, she would have been among the women most sought after in her day.

Besides all this there is one strange thing to be mentioned: there was not the slightest sensuality in her nature. She had grown up with me, and had no other wish than to continue and end her life in this brotherly and sisterly harmony. Since my return from the University we had been inseparable; with the most unreserved confidence we shared all our thoughts, feelings and fancies, and the impressions produced by every chance incident. When I went to Wetzlar, her loneliness seemed unbearable; my friend Schlosser, who was neither a stranger nor uncongenial to her, stepped into my place. In him, unfortunately, brotherly affection changed into a decided, and, judging by his strictly conscientious character, probably a first passion. Thus what people call a very suitable match presented itself, and my sister, after having steadfastly rejected several good offers, from insignificant men, whom she detested, allowed herself, as it seems to me, to be persuaded.

I must frankly confess that whenever I indulged in fancies about my sister's destiny, I did not like to think of her as the mistress of a house, but rather as an Abbess, or the Lady Superior of some noble community. She possessed every requisite for such a high position, while she was wanting in what the world deems indispensable. Over women she always exercised an irresistible influence; young minds were gently attracted towards her, and she ruled them by virtue of her mental superiority. As she shared my universal tolerance for the good and human, with all its eccentricities, provided it was unperverted, there was no need to conceal from her any idiosyncrasy which might mark unusual natural gifts, or for its owner to feel any constraint in her presence; hence our parties, as we have seen before, were always varied, easy, well-behaved, though occasionally somewhat daring in character. My habit of associating with young ladies in a respectful and courteous way, without any resultant feeling of being definitely bound or appropriated, was entirely due to her. And now the intelligent reader, who is capable of reading between these lines, will be able to form some conception of the grave feelings with which I set foot in Emmendingen.

But at my departure, after a short visit, a still heavier load lay on my heart, for my sister had earnestly recommended, not to say enjoined on me, to break off my connection with Lili. She herself had suffered much from a protracted engagement: Schlosser, with his conscientiousness, was not formally betrothed to her, until he was sure of his appointment in the Grand Duchy of Baden, indeed, until he was practically appointed. The final arrangement, however, was delayed in an incredible manner. If I may express my conjecture on the matter, the excellent Schlosser, able man of business as he was, was on account of his downright integrity not particularly acceptable, either as a servant, in direct contact with the Prince, or, still less, as a colleague, closely associated with the ministers. The appointment at Carlsruhe which he had expected and anxiously desired was not made. But the delay was explained to me, when the place of high bailiff in Emmendingen became vacant, and he was instantly selected for it. Thus an office of much dignity and profit was intrusted to him, for which he had shown himself fully competent. This position of complete independence seemed entirely suited to his taste and character; it enabled him to act according to his own convictions, and to be held responsible for everything, whether it brought him praise or blame.

As no objections could be raised to his accepting this appointment, my sister had to follow him, not indeed to a court-residence, as she had hoped, but to a place which must have seemed to her a lonely desert; to a dwelling, spacious enough, with its stately official dignity, but without opportunities of social intercourse. Some young ladies, with whom she had cultivated an early friendship, followed her there, and as the Gerock family was blessed with several daughters, these arranged to stay with her in turn, so that, whilst foregoing so much, she was solaced by the presence of at least one long-trusted friend.

These circumstances and experiences made her feel justified in recommending to me, most earnestly, a separation from Lili. She thought it cruel to snatch such a young lady (of whom she had formed the highest opinion) from her varied, if not brilliant sphere, and shut her up in our old house, which, although very passable in its way, was not suited for

the reception of distinguished society, setting her down, as it were, between a well-disposed, taciturn, but didactic father, and a mother extremely active in domestic matters, who, her day's work done, did not like to be disturbed, as she sat placidly sewing and engaged in comfortable conversation with select young friends whom she had attracted to her.

On the other hand, she put Lili's position clearly and vividly before me; for, partly in my letters, partly in confidential conversation, I had, with a lover's garrulousness, made her acquainted with everything, down to the smallest detail.

Unfortunately the picture she drew was only a circumstantial and well-meant amplification of what a gossiping friend, in whom we gradually ceased to trust, had contrived to insinuate into her mind by a few significant hints.

I could promise her nothing, although I was obliged to confess that she had convinced me. My heart was full of that feeling of suspense which suffices to feed love; for the child Cupid clings obstinately to the garment of Hope, even when she is preparing to hasten away with resolute footsteps.

The only thing between this place and Zurich which I now clearly remember, is the Falls of the Rhine at Schaffhausen. A mighty cascade here gives the first indication of the mountainous region which we designed to enter; where, by a series of ascents, each steeper and more difficult than the last, we were gradually and toilsomely to reach the heights.

The view of the lake of Zurich, which we enjoyed from the gate of the "Sword Inn," is still before me; I say from the gate of the inn, for, without stopping to enter it, I hastened to Lavater. He gave me a cheerful and cordial reception, and was, I must confess, charming beyond measure; affectionate, considerate, diffusing happiness and goodness; indeed, it would be impossible to imagine him otherwise. His wife, with a somewhat singular, but serene and devout expression of countenance, was, like everything else about him, in complete harmony with his way of thinking and living.

## NINETEENTH BOOK

Not without many new and renewed emotions and reflections did we pass over the remarkable heights above the lake of Lucerne on our way to Küssnacht, where we landed and pur-

sued our ramble in order to greet Tell's chapel by the roadside, and to reflect upon that assassination which, in the eyes of the whole world, was so heroic, patriotic, and glorious. We also crossed Lake Zug, which we had seen in the distance from the Rigi. In Zug, I only remember some painted glass, inserted in the casement of a room in the inn, not very large, but excellent in its way. Our route then led over the Albis into the Sihl valley, where we visited a young Hanoverian, von Lindau, who enjoyed living there in solitude; we tried by this means to soothe the annoyance he had felt some time before in Zurich, at my declining the offer of his company not in the most friendly or polite manner. The jealous friendship of the worthy Passavant was really the reason of my declining the companionship of a man I really liked, but whom it would have been inconvenient to have with me at that time.

But before we descend again from these glorious heights to the lake and to the pleasantly situated city, I must make one more remark upon my attempts to carry away some idea of the country by drawing and sketching. A habit from youth upward of viewing a landscape as a picture led me, whenever I observed any picturesque scene in nature, to try and fix it, and so preserve a lasting memento of such moments. But having hitherto only exercised myself on less ambitious subjects, I soon felt my incompetency in such surroundings.

Eagerness and haste combined forced me to adopt a singular expedient: no sooner had I noticed an interesting subject, and given in a few strokes the vaguest possible indication of it on paper, than I would elaborate the detail, which was beyond the power of my pencil, in words by the side of the sketch, and, by this means, make the scenes so thoroughly present to my mind, that afterwards, whenever I needed any of the scenes for a poem or a story, it would hover before my eyes, ready to be utilized.

Arrived at Zurich, I devoted my time almost exclusively to Lavater, whose hospitality I again claimed. The Physiognomy, with all its portraits and caricatures, weighed more and more heavily on the shoulders of the worthy man. We arranged everything as well as we could under the cir-

cumstances, and I promised him, on my return home, to continue my assistance.

I was led to give this promise by the unlimited confidence of youth in my own quickness of comprehension, and still more by a feeling of my ready adaptability; but, as a matter of fact, the way in which Lavater dissected physiognomies was not at all in my line. The impression which the man had made upon me at our first meeting, determined, in some degree, my relation to him, although a general wish to oblige, which was natural to me, together with the lightheartedness of youth, played a yet greater part, and caused me to see things in a somewhat hazy atmosphere.

Lavater's mind was an exceedingly striking one; in his society it was impossible to resist being definitely influenced by him, and I had no choice but to observe foreheads and noses, eyes and mouths, individually, and consider their relations and proportions. My seer friend did this from necessity, in order to account to himself for what he perceived so clearly; but to me it always seemed a mean trick, a piece of espionage, to attempt to analyze a man before his face, and so discover his hidden moral peculiarities. I preferred to listen to his conversation, in which he revealed himself at will. So, too, I must confess to always feeling a certain apprehensiveness in Lavater's presence; for, while by his art of physiognomy, he possessed himself of our peculiarities, he also made himself, by conversation, master of our thoughts, which, with a little sagacity, he would easily guess as we talked.

No one willingly concedes superiority to another, so long as he can in any way deny it. Natural gifts of every kind cannot easily be denied, and yet in the common parlance of the day genius was ascribed to the poet alone. But now another world seemed all at once to emerge; genius was looked for in the physician, in the general, in the statesman, and before long, in all men who thought to make themselves eminent either in theory or practice. Zimmerman, especially, had advanced these claims. Lavater, by his views of Physiognomy, was compelled to assume a more general distribution of mental gifts of all kinds; the word *genius* became a universal watchword, and because men heard it uttered so

often, they thought that what it stood for was to be met with everywhere. Then, since every one felt justified in demanding genius of others, he finally believed that he must possess it himself. The time was yet far distant when it could be affirmed, that genius is that power of man which by its deeds and actions gives laws and rules. At this time it was thought to manifest itself only by overstepping existing laws, breaking established rules, and declaring itself above all restraint. It was, therefore, an easy thing to be a genius, and nothing was more natural than that its abuse in word and deed should rouse all well-regulated minds to oppose such a disordered state of affairs.

When anybody rushed into the world on foot, without exactly knowing why or whither, it was called a tour of genius; and when any one took in hand some aimless and useless absurdity, it was a stroke of genius. Young men, full of energy, often really gifted, came to grief in their scorn of all moderation; and then older and more sensible men, wanting, perhaps, in talent and in soul, took a malicious pleasure in making their many failures appear ridiculous in the eyes of the public.

And hence I found myself almost more hindered in my efforts after self-development and expression by the misguided coöperation and influence of kindred spirits, than by the opposition of those whose aims were directly contrary to my own. Words, epithets, and phrases in disparagement of the highest mental gifts were caught up by the unthinking masses and became stereotyped catchwords, so that to-day they are still occasionally heard on the lips of the uneducated; they even found their way into dictionaries. In this way the word genius had suffered so much from misrepresentation, that it seemed almost necessary to banish it entirely from the German language.

And so the Germans, with whom what is vulgar is more apt to prevail than with other nations, would perhaps have sacrificed the fairest flower of speech, the word which, though apparently foreign, really belongs to every people, had not a sense of what is highest and best in man been revived and happily restored by a profounder philosophy.

After allowing Merck to triumph over me in Darmstadt

because he had foreseen my speedy separation from these gay companions, I found myself again in Frankfort, well received by every one, including my father, although he could not conceal his disappointment that I had not gone down to Airolo and announced to him from Milan my arrival in Italy. It was not so much what he said as what his silence implied; in particular he did not show the slightest interest in those wild rocks, those lakes of mist, and dragons' haunts. At last, however, by an incidental remark, by no means intended as a contradiction, he showed what had been at the back of his mind all the time: he who has not seen Naples has lived in vain.

On my return I did not, I could not, avoid seeing Lili; our attitude towards one another was tender and considerate. I was informed that she had been fully convinced in my absence that she must break off her intimacy with me, and that this was the more necessary and indeed more practicable, since I had made my meaning sufficiently clear by my journey and voluntary absence. Nevertheless, the same spots in town and country, the same friends, acquainted with all our past, could scarcely leave us untouched—we who were still lovers, although drawn apart in a mysterious way. It was an accursed state, in some ways resembling Hades, the meeting-place of the sadly happy dead.

There were moments when departed days seemed to revive, but instantly disappeared; like vanishing ghosts.

Some kind people had told me in confidence, that Lili, when all the obstacles to our union were laid before her, had declared that for love of me she was ready to renounce her present life with all its ties, and to go with me to America. America was then, perhaps, even more than now, the Eldorado of all who felt unhappy in their present position.

But the very thing which should have raised my hopes, only depressed them the more. My handsome paternal house, only a few hundred steps from hers, offered certainly more tolerable prospects than the uncertain and distant surroundings beyond the ocean; still I do not deny that in her presence all hopes, all wishes sprang to life again, and irresolution was stirring within me.

True, the injunctions of my sister were very peremptory

and precise; not only had she, with all the reasonableness of which she was mistress, explained the situation to me, but she had also, in her sadly urgent letters, harped upon the same text with yet greater insistence. "Well," said she, "if you could not help it, then you would have to bear it; such things one must *suffer* but not *choose*." Some months passed away in this most miserable of all conditions; all onlookers were now opposed to the union; in her alone I felt, I knew, lay the power which could have overcome every difficulty.

Both the lovers, conscious of their position, avoided all solitary interviews; but, in company, they could not help meeting as usual. It was then that the strongest trial had to be endured.

All these incidents of my inner and outer life, so far as they were likely to pain my father, were cleverly kept from him by my mother's prudent intervention. Nevertheless he let matters take their course, and diligently occupied himself with his little legal affairs. The young juristic friend, as well as the dexterous amanuensis, extended their sphere of activity in his name continually. As is well known, out of sight is out of mind; so they let me take my own way, and sought to establish themselves firmly on a soil on which I was not destined to thrive.

Fortunately my own tendencies corresponded with the sentiments and wishes of my father. He had so great an idea of my poetic talents, and felt so personal a pleasure in the success of my earliest efforts, that he often talked to me on the subject of new and further attempts. On the other hand, I carefully concealed from him these social effusions and poems of passion.

After making *Götz von Berlichingen* the representative of an important epoch of the world, as it appeared to me, I carefully looked out for another crisis in political history of similar interest. The revolt of the Netherlands attracted my attention. In Götz, I had depicted a true man sinking under the delusion that, in times of anarchy, a strong, well-meaning man counts for something. The design of Egmont was to show that the most firmly established institutions cannot maintain themselves against a powerful and shrewdly calculating despotism. I had talked so eagerly with my father about

what the piece ought to be, and what I would make it, that it inspired him with an invincible desire to see the play, which I had already worked out in my head, set down on paper, printed, and admired.

In earlier times, while I still hoped to make Lili my own, I had applied myself with the utmost diligence to the study and practice of civil business, but now I sought to fill the fearful gulf which separated me from her with occupations appealing more to my intellect and soul. I therefore set to work in earnest on the composition of *Egmont.* Unlike the first sketch of *Götz von Berlichingen,* however, it was not written in the right sequence and order; but after the first introduction I went straight on to the main scenes without troubling myself about the various connecting links. By this means I made rapid progress, because my father, knowing my fitful way of working, spurred me on (literally and without exaggeration) day and night, and seemed to believe that what was so easily conceived, might be completed with the same ease.

TWENTIETH BOOK

And so I went on working at my *Egmont;* and while I found in it some alleviation of my wounded passion, the society of a clever artist also helped me through many an evil hour. And thus, as had often before been the case, a vague attempt at practical improvement brought me a secret peace of mind, at a time when otherwise it was scarcely to be hoped for.

Georg Melchior Kraus, who had been born at Frankfort, but educated in Paris, had just returned from a short tour in Northern Germany; he paid me a visit, and I immediately felt an impulse and a need to attach myself to him. He was a light-hearted man of the world, whose easy delightful talent had found in Paris the training it needed.

He was a most agreeable companion; a cheerful equanimity never failed him; obliging without obsequiousness, reserved without pride, he was everywhere at home, everywhere beloved, the most active, and, at the same time, the least difficult of mortals. With such talents and such a disposition, he soon won favor in aristocratic circles; he was especially well received at the castle of the Baron von Stein, at Nassau on

the Lahn, whose accomplished and charming daughter he assisted in her artistic studies, and contributed in various ways to the social life of the castle.

Upon the marriage of this excellent lady to the Count von Werther, the newly wedded couple took the artist with them to their large estates in Thuringia, and thus he too found his way to Weimar. Here he became known and appreciated, and a wish was expressed by the brilliant circle gathered there, that he would fix his permanent abode in that city.

Helpful as he was to everybody, upon his return at this time to Frankfort he stimulated my love of art, which had been limited to merely collecting, to practical effort. The dilettante needs the presence of the artist, for he sees in the latter the complement of himself: the aspirations of the amateur are realized by the artist.

By a certain natural talent, aided by practice, I could manage an outline with fair success; and I could easily compose a picture from what I saw before me in nature; but I wanted the peculiar plastic power, the masterly workmanship, which gives body to the outline by well-graduated light and shade. My copies were rather remote suggestions of the real form, and my figures resembled those light airy beings in Dante's Purgatory, which, casting no shadow themselves, are filled with alarm at the shadows of actual bodies.

Thanks to Lavater's physiognomical mania—for so we may well designate the importunate urgency with which he called upon all men, not only to observe physiognomies, but also to make practical attempts, whether artistic or bungling, at copying faces,—I had had some practice in drawing portraits of friends on gray paper, with black and white chalk. The likeness was not to be mistaken, but it required the hand of my artistic friend to make them stand out from the dark background.

When we turned over and looked through the rich portfolio of drawings which the good Kraus had brought back from his travels, the subject he liked best among sketches of landscapes and persons, was the circle at Weimar and its vicinity. On such paintings I, too, loved to linger, as it could not but be flattering to my youthful vanity, to find so

many pictures only the text for the statement, constantly repeated in great detail, that they hoped to see me there.

In the course of this biography we have shown in detail how the child, the boy, the youth, sought by various ways to approach the supernatural; first, looking with strong inclination to a religion of nature; then, clinging with love to a positive one; and, finally, concentrating himself in the trial of his own powers and joyfully giving himself up to a general faith. Whilst he wandered to and fro, seeking and looking about him, in the intervals which lay between these several phases, he met with much that would not fit into any of them, and he seemed to realize more and more clearly the desirability of turning his thoughts away from the immense and incomprehensible.

He thought he could detect in nature—both animate and inanimate, with soul and without soul—something which manifested itself only in contradictions, and which, therefore, could not be comprehended under any idea, still less under one word. It was not godlike, for it seemed without reason; nor human, for it had no understanding; nor devilish, for it was beneficent; nor angelic, for it often betrayed a malicious pleasure. It resembled chance, for it evinced no succession; it was like Providence, for it hinted at connection. It seemed to penetrate all that limits us; it seemed to deal arbitrarily with the necessary elements of our existence; it contracted time and expanded space. In the impossible alone did it appear to find pleasure, while it rejected the possible with contempt.

To this principle, which seemed to come in between all other principles and separate them, and yet link them together, I gave the name of Daemonic, after the example of the ancients and others with similar experiences. I sought to escape from this terrible principle, by taking refuge, according to my wont, in a creation of the imagination.

Among the parts of history which I had particularly studied, were the events that made the countries which subsequently became the United Netherlands so famous. I had diligently examined the original sources, and had endeavored, as far as possible, to get my facts at first hand, and to bring the whole period vividly before me. The situations it pre-

sented appeared to me to be in the highest degree dramatic, while Count Egmont, whose greatness as a man and a hero most captivated me, seemed to me a suitable central figure round whom the others might be grouped with happiest effect.

But for my purpose it was necessary to convert him into a character marked by such peculiarities as would grace a youth better than a man in years, and an unmarried man better than the father of a family; a man leading an independent life, rather than one, who, however free in thought, is nevertheless restrained by the various relations of life.

Having then, in my conception of Egmont's character, made him youthful, and freed him from all fettering restraints, I gave him unlimited love of life, boundless self-reliance, a gift of attracting all men, enabling him to win the favor of the people, the unspoken attachment of a princess, the avowed passion of a child of nature, the sympathy of a shrewd politician, and even the loving admiration of the son of his greatest adversary.

The personal courage which distinguishes the hero is the foundation upon which his whole character rests, the ground whence it springs. He knows no danger, and is blind to the greatest peril when it confronts him. When surrounded by enemies, we may, at need, cut our way through them; the meshes of state policy are harder to break. The Daemonic element, which plays a part on both sides, in conflict with which what is lovable falls while what is hated triumphs; further the prospect that out of this conflict will spring a third element, and fulfill the wishes of all men;—this perhaps is what has gained for the piece (not, indeed, on its first appearance, but later and in due time), the favor which it still enjoys. Here, therefore, for the sake of many dear readers, I will forestall myself, and as I do not know when I shall have another opportunity, will express a conviction, which did not become clear to me till a later date.

Although this Daemonic element manifests itself in all corporeal and incorporeal things, and even expresses itself most distinctly in animals, yet it is primarily in its relation to man that we observe its mysterious workings, which represent a force, if not antagonistic to the moral order, yet run-

ning counter to it, so that the one may be regarded as the warp, and the other as the woof.

For the phenomena which result there are innumerable names; for all philosophies and religions have sought in prose and poetry to solve this enigma and to read once for all the riddle; and may they still continue to seek.

But the most fearful manifestation of the Daemonic is when it is seen predominating in some individual character. During my life I have observed several instances, either closely or at a distance. Such persons are not always the most eminent men, either in intellect or special gifts, and they are seldom distinguished by goodness of heart; a tremendous energy seems to emanate from them, and they exercise a wonderful power over all creatures, and even over the elements; and, indeed, who shall say how much further such influence may extend? All the moral powers combined are of no avail against them; in vain does the more enlightened portion of mankind attempt to throw suspicion upon them as dupes or as deceivers—the masses are attracted by them. Seldom if ever do they find their equals among their contemporaries; nothing can vanquish them but the universe itself, with which they have begun the fray; and it is from observation of facts such as these that the strange, but tremendous saying must have risen: *Nemo contra Deum nisi Deus ipse.*

From these lofty reflections I return to the littleness of my own life, for which strange events, clothed at least with a daemonic appearance, were in store. From the summit of Mont Gothard, I had turned my back upon Italy, and returned home, because I could not live without Lili. An affection, which is grounded on the hope of a mutual happiness in one another, of a permanent union, does not die away all at once; on the contrary, it is nourished by the contemplation of legitimate desires and of honest hopes which we cherish.

It is in the nature of things, that in such cases the maiden should be consoled before the youth. To these beautiful children, the descendants of Pandora, is granted the enviable gift to charm, attract, and, instinctively and half-consciously rather than voluntarily, or still less, wantonly, to gather admirers around them; and thus, like the Magician's Apprentice, they are often in danger of being frightened by the

swelling crowd of their adorers. And then at last a choice must be made from among them all; some one must be exclusively preferred; some one must lead home the bride.

And how often does accident influence the choice and determine the decision of the chooser! I had renounced Lili from conviction, but love made me suspect my conviction. Lili had taken leave of me with the same feelings, and I had set out on a beautiful tour in order to distract my mind, but it produced the opposite effect.

As long as I was absent I believed in the separation, but did not believe in the renunciation. Recollections, hopes, and wishes, all had free play. Now I came back, and while the re-union of free and happy lovers is a heaven, the meeting again of youth and maiden who are kept apart by mere motives of prudence, is an intolerable purgatory, a forecourt of hell. When I again entered the circle in which Lili moved, all the dissonances which had from time to time marred our relation to one another, seemed to have gained double force; when I stood once more before her, the conviction that she was lost to me, fell heavy upon my heart.

Accordingly I resolved a second time on flight; therefore nothing could have been more opportune for me, than that the young ducal pair of Weimar should come from Carlsruhe to Frankfort, and that I should follow them to Weimar in compliance with constantly repeated invitations. Their Highnesses had always maintained towards me a gracious and confidential manner, which I for my part reciprocated with passionate gratitude. My attachment to the Duke from the first moment I saw him; my veneration for the Princess whom I had known so long, though only by sight; a desire to render some personal service to Wieland, who had shown himself so magnanimous towards me, and to atone on the very spot for my half-willful, half-unintentional improprieties, were sufficient motives to make me anxious, or rather determined, to go, even had I been free from my unhappy passion. But I had the additional incentive of being forced to flee from Lili somewhere or other; whether to the south, where, according to my father's daily narratives, a most glorious paradise of art and nature awaited me, or to the north, whither so distinguished a circle of eminent men invited me.

The young princely pair now reached Frankfort on their way home. The Duke of Meiningen and his suite were there at the same time, and by them, as well as by the Privy Counselor von Dürkheim, who accompanied the young princes, I was received in the most friendly manner possible. But now, as might be expected, a strange incident occurred quite in keeping with my youthful inexperience: by a little misunderstanding I was thrown into an incredible but rather laughable perplexity.

Their Highnesses of Weimar and Meiningen were living at the same hotel. I received one day an invitation to dinner. My mind was so preoccupied with the Court of Weimar, that it never occurred to me to inquire further, especially as I was not so presumptuous as to imagine that any notice would be taken of me by the Duke of Meiningen. Accordingly I went carefully arrayed to the "Roman Emperor," and found the apartments of the Weimar family empty; being informed that the Duke and his suite were with his Highness of Meiningen, I betook myself thither, and was kindly received. Supposing that this was only a morning visit, or that perhaps the two Dukes were to dine together, I awaited the issue. Suddenly, however, the Weimar suite began to move, and I of course followed; but instead of returning to their own apartments they went straight downstairs and into their carriages, and I was left alone in the street.

Now, instead of investigating the matter skillfully and prudently, and finding some solution, with my usual precipitancy I went straight home, where I found my parents at dessert. My father shook his head, while my mother tried to console me for my disappointment. In the evening she told me in confidence, that after I had gone away, my father had said, he was much surprised that I, who was not generally so stupid, could not see that in that quarter they only wished to make a fool of me and put me to shame. But this did not move me: for meanwhile I had met with Herr von Dürkheim, who in his mild way brought me to book with sundry graceful and humorous reproaches. I was now awakened from my dream, and had an opportunity to express my most sincere thanks for the favor intended me, contrary to my hopes and expectations, and to ask forgiveness for my blunder.

After I had determined on good grounds to accept their friendly offers, the following arrangement was made. A gentleman of the Duke's suite, who had stayed behind in Carlsruhe to wait for a landau which was being built in Strasburg, was to be in Frankfort by a certain day, and I was to hold myself in readiness to set off directly with him for Weimar. The hearty and gracious farewell with which the young sovereigns took their leave of me, the friendly behavior of the courtiers, made me look forward most eagerly to this journey, to which the way seemed to have been made so pleasantly smooth.

But here, too, accidents came in to complicate so simple an arrangement; my passionate impatience made it worse and nearly upset it altogether. Having announced the day of my departure, I had taken leave of everybody, and after hastily packing up my chattels, not forgetting my unprinted manuscripts, I waited anxiously for the hour which was to bring the aforesaid friend in the new landau, and to carry me to a new country, and to new circumstances. The hour passed, and the day also; to avoid a second leave-taking and the intrusion of visitors, I had given out that I had gone away the morning fixed for my departure, and so I was obliged to keep in the house, and in fact in my own room, and consequently found myself in a strange predicament.

But since solitude and a confined space had always proved auspicious to me, because I was compelled to find employment under these circumstances, I set to work on my *Egmont,* and almost completed it. I read it over to my father, who had acquired a peculiar interest in this piece, and desired nothing more than to see it finished and in print, since he hoped that it would add to his son's reputation. He needed something of this sort to pacify and reassure him; for he was inclined to make very grave comments on the non-arrival of the carriage. He considered the whole affair a fiction, would not believe in any new landau, and pronounced the gentleman left behind to be a phantom of the air. It was, however, only indirectly that he gave me to understand all this; but he worried himself and my mother with all the greater insistence, maintaining that the whole thing was a piece of court pleasantry, which they had perpetrated in consequence of my

former escapades, in order to insult and disgrace me by leaving me ignominiously in the lurch, instead of conferring on me the honor I expected.

For myself, at first I adhered to my own belief, and congratulated myself upon these solitary hours, undisturbed by friends and strangers, or by any sort of social distraction. I therefore worked on vigorously at *Egmont,* though not without inward misgivings. And this frame of mind perhaps reacted favorably on the piece itself; for, stirred as it is by so many passions, it could not well have been written by one entirely passionless.

In this way a week and more went by, and I began to find this complete incarceration irksome. Accustomed for many years to live much in the open air, and to associate with friends on the most frank and familiar terms, to be constantly by the side of one dearly beloved, from whom indeed I had resolved to part, but who, as long as there was any possibility of meeting, drew me irresistibly to her—all this began to make me so uneasy, that my interest in my tragedy threatened to flag and my inventive powers to suffer from my impatience. Already for several evenings I had found it impossible to remain at home. Wrapped in a long cloak, I crept about the city, past the houses of my friends and acquaintances, not omitting to approach Lili's window. She lived on the ground floor of a corner house; the green blinds were down, but I could see plainly that the lights stood in their usual places. Soon I heard her singing at the piano; it was the song, *With resistless power why dost thou press me?* which I had written for her hardly a year before. She seemed to me to sing it with more expression than ever; I could make out every word distinctly; for I had placed my ear as close as the convex lattice would permit. After she had finished the song, I saw by the shadow which fell upon the curtain that she got up and walked backwards and forwards, but I sought in vain to catch the outline of her lovely person through the thick curtains. Nothing but the firm resolve to tear myself away, and not to trouble her by my presence, but actually to renounce her, and the thought of the strange stir my reappearance would cause, could have determined me not to linger near one I loved so dearly.

Several more days passed away, and my father's hypothesis became more and more probable, since not even a letter arrived from Carlsruhe to explain the non-appearance of the carriage. I was unable to go on with my poetry, and now, in the uneasiness with which I was inwardly distracted, my father had the game in his own hands. He represented to me, that it could not be helped; my trunk was packed, and he would give me money and credit to go to Italy; but I must decide to start at once. In such a difficult case, I naturally doubted and hesitated. Finally, however, I agreed that if, by a certain hour, neither carriage nor message had come, I would set off, directing my steps first of all to Heidelberg and thence across the Alps, not, however, going through Switzerland again, but rather taking the route through the Grisons, or the Tyrol.

Strange things must inevitably ensue, when a youth without plans and very apt of himself to go astray, is further incited by the passionate misconception of an old man to go on a wrong tack. But it is part of youth and life in general to understand the tactics after the campaign is over. In the ordinary course of things such an accident would be easy to explain; but we are always too ready to conspire with error against what is naturally probable, just as we shuffle the cards before we deal them round, in order that chance may not be deprived of its full share in the game. It is precisely thus that the element arises in and upon which the Daemonic loves to work; and it sports with us the more cruelly, the more certain we feel of its presence.

The last day of my waiting had gone, and the next morning I was to start; and now I felt an immense longing to see my friend Passavant again, who had just returned from Switzerland, and who would really have had cause to be offended if, by keeping my plans entirely to myself, I had violated the intimate confidence which subsisted between us. I therefore sent word to him by a stranger, requesting a meeting by night at a certain spot. I was the first to arrive enveloped in my cloak; but he was not long after me, and if he wondered at the appointment, he must have been still more surprised to meet the person he did. His joy, however, was equal to his astonishment; discussion of plans and counsel

were not to be thought of, he could only wish me good luck on my Italian journey, and so we parted. The next day at an early hour I found myself on the mountain road.

I had several reasons for going to Heidelberg; the first was a sensible one, for I had heard that our Weimar friend intended to pass through Heidelberg from Carlsruhe; and so, immediately on reaching the post-house, I left a note which was to be handed to a traveler who should pass through in the carriage described; the second reason was one of sentiment, and had reference to my recent relations with Lili. In short, Mademoiselle Delf, who had been the confidante of our love, and indeed the mediator with our respective parents for their approval of our definite engagement, lived there; and I deemed it the greatest happiness to be able, before I left Germany, to talk over those happy times with a valued, patient, and indulgent friend.

I was well received, and introduced to many families; my visits to the family of the high warden of the forests, von W——, particularly pleased me. The parents were dignified and easy in their manners, and one of the daughters resembled Frederica. It was just the time of vintage, the weather beautiful, and all my Alsatian feelings revived in the beautiful valley of the Neckar and Rhine. At this time I had been going through strange experiences, both as regards myself and others; but they were as yet vague and undigested in my mind, and had borne no fruit in my life; whatever sense of the infinite had been awakened within me served rather to confuse and perplex me. In society, nevertheless, I was my usual self, perhaps even more pleasant and sociable than before. Here, under this clear sky, among happy people, I revived the old pleasures which never lose their novelty and charm for youth. With an earlier and not yet extinguished love in my heart, I involuntarily excited sympathy, even though I never alluded to it, and thus I soon became at home in this circle, and indeed necessary to it, and I forgot that I had resolved, after a few evenings of friendly chat, to continue my journey.

Mademoiselle Delf was one of those persons who, without exactly intriguing, always like to have some business in hand, and while giving others something to do always have some

end in view. She had conceived a sincere friendship for me; and it was the more easy for her to prevail on me to prolong my visit as I lived in her house, so that she was able to suggest all manner of inducements for my stay, and raise all manner of obstacles to my journey. When, however, I wanted to turn the conversation to Lili, she was not so amenable and sympathetic as I had hoped. On the contrary, she approved of our mutual resolution to part under the circumstances, and maintained that one must submit to the inevitable, banish the impossible from one's mind, and try to find some new interest in life. With her love of scheming she had not intended to leave chance to decide what this should be, but had already formed a project for my future disposal, from which I clearly saw that her recent invitation to Heidelberg had not been so unpremeditated as it sounded.

She reminded me that the Electoral Prince, Karl Theodor, who had done so much for the arts and sciences, still resided at Mannheim, and that as the court was Roman Catholic while the country was Protestant, the latter party was extremely anxious to strengthen itself by enlisting the services of able and hopeful men. I must now go, in God's name, to Italy, and there mature my views on Art; meanwhile they would work for me. It would, on my return, soon be seen whether the budding affection of Fräulein von W—— had expanded or had been nipped, and whether it would be politic, through an alliance with a family of good standing to establish myself and my fortunes in a new home.

I did not, it is true, reject all these suggestions; but my natural distaste for making plans did not wholly accord with the scheming ways of my friend; I was gratified, however, with the kind intentions of the moment, while Lili's image floated before me, waking and dreaming, and mingled with everything else which afforded me pleasure or distraction. But now I called to mind the seriousness of my great traveling plan, and I resolved to make myself free, gently and courteously, and in a few days resume my route.

One night Mademoiselle Delf had gone on until late unfolding her plans, and all that certain people were disposed to do for me, and I could not but feel grateful for such sentiments, although the design of a particular group to strengthen

their position through me and my possible influence at court, might be dimly recognized. It was about one o'clock when we separated. I soon fell into a sound sleep, but before very long I was awakened by the horn of a postilion on horseback who stopped in front of the house. Very soon Mademoiselle Delf appeared with a light, and a letter in her hands, and coming up to my bed-side, she exclaimed, "Here it is; read and tell me what it says. It is sure to be from the Weimar people. If it is an invitation do not obey it, but remember our conversation." I asked her to give me a light and leave me for a quarter of an hour to myself. She went away reluctantly. I remained lost in thought for some time without opening the letter. The express came from Frankfort, I knew both the seal and handwriting; the friend, then, had arrived there; he was still true to his invitation, and our own want of faith and indecision had made us act prematurely. Why could one not wait quietly at home for a man whose coming had been definitely promised, but whose arrival might be delayed by so many accidents? The scales fell from my eyes. All the kindness, the graciousness, the confidence of the past came vividly before me, and I was almost ashamed of my strange evasion. I opened the letter, and found all that had happened explained quite naturally. My missing guide had waited for the new landau which was to come from Strasburg, day after day, hour after hour, as we had waited for him; then business had taken him round by Mannheim on his way to Frankfort, and to his dismay he had not found me there. He sent the hasty letter by express, assuming that now the mistake was explained I should instantly return, and save him the shame of going to Weimar without me.

Much as my understanding and my feeling inclined me to this side, there were still weighty arguments in favor of my new route. My father had drawn up for me a very attractive plan of travel, and had equipped me with a little library, to prepare me for the scenes I was to visit, and guide me amid them. In my leisure hours I had had no other entertainment than to reflect on it, and, indeed, during my last short journey I had thought of nothing else in the coach. Those glorious objects which, from my youth up, I had become acquainted with in picture and fable, rose up be-

fore my mental vision, and nothing seemed to me so attractive as to travel nearer to them as I traveled further and further from Lili.

In the meantime I had dressed and was walking up and down my chamber. My anxious hostess entered. "What am I to hope?" she cried. "Dearest madam," I answered, "use no more arguments; I have made up my mind to return; I have carefully weighed the reasons, and to repeat them to you would be waste of time. The decision has to be made sooner or later, and who should make it but the person whom it most concerns?"

I was moved, and so was she; and an agitated scene ensued, which I cut short by ordering my servant to procure a post-chaise. In vain I begged my hostess to calm herself, and to turn the mock-departure which I had taken of the company the evening before into a real one; to consider that it was only a temporary visit, merely to pay my respects, that my Italian journey was not given up, and my return to Heidelberg was not precluded. She would hear none of it, and increased my agitation yet more. The coach was at the door; everything was packed, and the postilion sounded his wonted note of impatience; I tore myself away; she was still unwilling to let me go, and with great skill arrayed all the arguments arising from the present situation, so that finally, with passionate emotion, I called out in the words of Egmont—

"Child! child! no more! The coursers of time, lashed, as it were, by invisible spirits, hurry on the light car of our destiny, and all that we can do is with calm courage to hold the reins firmly, and to guide the wheels, now to the left, now to the right, avoiding a stone here, or a precipice there. Who can tell whither he is being borne? seeing he hardly remembers whence he has come."

END OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

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